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ABSTRACT

This report reveals the results of studies made of three groups actively seeking community participation in school affairs in a city noted for its conservative school system. The study utilized participant observation supplemented by interviews and document analysis. Each group had only 15-30 active members and no broad base in the ccmmunity. All three groups were created by the "establishment" and were dependent on government and/or foundation money for their existence. Like the community action agencies of OEO, these groups are training a new cadre of leadership among minorities in this city. The main accomplishment of the community groups has been a recognitiсn of their rights to exist and to exert some real influence on educational policy. (Author/JF)

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Final Report

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The Community Schools Movement in Compton City

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PREFACE

All names of places, groups, and persons used in this report are fictitious.

SUMMARY

In Compton City, which is noted for the conservatism of its school system, three of the groups most active in seeking community participation in school affairs were studied over a period of one to two years. Twelve additional groups were observed briefly. The method used was participant observation.

The goals the groups set for themselves were somewhat vague. They studiously avoided demanding "community control". However they sought "participation" in choosing the staff for their local schools, in designing new school buildings, in determining their basic educational philosophy and in shaping the curriculum. One faction - mainly composed of upper middle class whites - were committed to non-graded, open classrooms and individualized instruction. The black groups were chiefly concerned with more successful mastery of the fundamentals by their children so that they could compete on equal terms with white students when they left their de facto segregated elementary schools for high school. The groups most resembling the white majority of the city in their composition were concerned mainly about deterioration of the physical plant.

All the groups studied had only a tiny core of active members - 15 to 30 - and no broad base in the community. All three of the groups we studied intensively were actually brought into existence by the "establishment" - even when this occurred as a mobilization of the group to protest plans for a school which the local government agencies had brought before the community for its stamp of approval. The protests focussed less on the plans than on the fact that the community had not participated from the first in the planning. This type of protest, and many of the people involved in it, were clearly a carryover from experience in the community action agencies set up by OEO in its anti-poverty campaign.

The community school groups in Compton City are dependent on government and/or foundation money for their existence. They are sufficiently weak organizationally so that if the funds were withdrawn, they would dissolve. Despite this weakness they have gained recognition as legitimate spokesmen for their communities and, through dialogue with the school and city authorities, they have accomplished a few of their intermediate goals. They have participated in the design of new schools. In one instance a group participated in choosing the staff of a new school in its neighborhood. In more than one instance groups, sometimes working with teachers, have designed and tested experimental curricula. The black groups have seen black teachers in the

system promoted to administrative posts because of their pressure. They have also opened up training possibilities for themselves as paraprofessionals in the schools and eventually, under provisions of EPDA, as teachers. One group has expanded its activities into the area of health and has demanded and received concessions from the major health center in its neighborhood.

One consequence of the groups' existence is that like the community action agencies of OEO, they are training a new cadre of leadership among minorities in the city.

Basically the community-school groups in Compton City have had their power handed to them. The school system and local government feel that community participation has become a necessary ingredient for legitimate policy-making on their part. In Compton City the dialogue has sometimes been angry but there has been little disruption and no violence. The School Department is not totally unreceptive to suggestions for change. Continued dialogue and continued, very gradual change are the outlook for the near future.

The main accomplishment of the community groups has been a recognition of their right to exist and to exert some real influence on educational policy. It seems possible that they will become a fully institutionalized part of the system of governance for schools, though if this occurs, it will probably take a somewhat different form from that in New York City.

INTRODUCTION

The community action movement, of which community participation in the schools is a major part, raises serious questions for the organization of American cities. In most urban centers there are five new systems of community organizations--the product of Black Power and federal legislation in the nineteen-sixties. They are: community action groups in the anti-poverty campaign; neighborhood groups mandated to work with urban newal authorities; local health associations springing up around OEO's neighborhood health centers or formed under provisions of the Community Mental Act; the community groups participating in Model Cities programs; and the neighborhood school groups initiated under Title I or Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or founded by community leaders.

The new community organizations have moved as fast as they can from an "advisory" status to demand a policy-making role in the delivery of urban services: social welfare, housing, health and education. In some instances the demands have produced severe conflict; in others a measure of cooperation has developed between the bureaucracy controlling the service and the community groups.

In Compton City, where our study is located, it is not yet clear whether there will be cooperation or conflict because the key questions of whether the community school groups will or will not share in the major decisions concerning personnel, curriculum and educational style and methods have still not been confronted.

The method used in this study of Compton's neighborhood school groups was mainly participant-observation supplemented by interviews and analysis of documents.* We began with a list of some 30 organizations in the city known to be concerned exclusively or mainly with education. By a process of successive exclusion, which involved attending their meetings and discussing their activities and goals with their leaders, we settled on three groups which--in contrast with most of the others--are intensely active. For instance, they meet several times monthly--as compared to the usual once a month or less--and their committees meet often in the interim between full meetings of the group. Aside from this criterion of amount of activity, we selected our three groups from different areas of the

*See Appendix on Methods for more detail.

city and different ethnic groups. One is predominantly Chinese and white; one is very predominantly black except for its school staff members; and one is racially mixed, black and white.

Our original intention of selecting groups which differed in degree of militancy could not be fulfilled. No community school group in Compton City is at present demanding community "control" of the schools. All three of our groups, however, are demanding a considerable degree of participation in major educational decisions. Their demands go much further than do those of the groups which are less active.

We are certain that the groups we have chosen for detailed analysis are three of the most important community school groups in Compton City.* Their success or failure in attaining their goals will mean the success or failure of the movement as a whole. It will be five years before a mature judgment of the significance of this movement can be made. In the meantime we have set down the first part of the record.

THE APPLEY SCHOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Setting

The Appley School building is over a hundred years old and parts of it are unsafe for use. It was marked for replacement by a city investigatory group several years ago. The pupils in its grades K through 5 are 99% Chinese. The other elementary school in the Appley district, also destined to be closed soon, houses grades K through 8. It is about 30% Chinese but it also has white, Negro, and Puerto Rican pupils. These two schools share a principal. They recruit children from an area on the edge of the central business district which includes Chinatown, Palace Circle--a D-3 middle income housing project with Chinese, white, Negro and Puerto Rican tenants, and a tiny neighborhood of upper middle class homes but few children, called Snug Harbor. While the three neighborhoods are not rich, neither is the community poor enough for its schools to qualify for Title I, ESEA, funds or a neighborhood anti-poverty office under the OEO. The fourth member of the community is the Compton Medical Center consisting of a medical school and several teaching hospitals.

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*Twelve additional groups are described in much less detail.

Genesis

The new Appley School was conceived in a period when urban renewal funds were helping to make possible the rebuilding and expanding of the Compton Medical Center and when Title III, ESEA funds were available to Compton City for planning innovative schools. The Planning Office of the Compton Medical Center had an interest in making the new Appley School a superior one, hopefully attractive to some of its young staff members who might live in the city near their place of work if an excellent school were available for their children. The Compton City School Department was interested in the Medical Center's offer to make this school the base for experimental innovation in the delivery of health services to school children. As a result of these two interests the School Department subcontracted the Medical Center Planning Office, under Title III, ESEA, to "plan an innovative environment" for the school. At the same time a team of health specialists at the Medical Center obtained a Title III contract of their own to work out a pilot model for delivery of health services in the existing elementary schools of the district which would later be transferred to the new Appley School.

At its inception, the Appley School Project of the Compton Medical Center Planning Office had an Advisory Council on which all the state and city agencies with any jurisdictional relationship to the building of new schools in Compton City were represented. The Council met monthly to hear progress reports and give advice. A neighborhood Recreation Committee representing a number of local agencies also advised the Project staff. This was how the Title III provision for "community participation" was met by this project from its start in 1966 until July, 1968.

From the very beginning there were some discrepancies in the way that the Planning Office, the health team, and the Compton School Department each defined its role in the Project. The Planning Office, for example, chose to define the "design of an innovative environment" to include not only physical but educational planning. They regarded the two as so interconnected that they were virtually inseparable. However there is no evidence that representatives of the School Department defined the situation in this way. Educational planning, they took for granted, was within their jurisdiction. The only educational matter on which the two parties explicitly agreed was that the school was to be a non-graded one. This point was negotiated early in the planning since its implications for the physical environment were critical. However, the Planning Office went much further in its thinking with respect to its own educational responsibilities. One of its leading ideas was the design of a multi-use building which would combine in one structure: a school, a wide variety of social

services to the community, and housing. The purpose was to destroy the isolation of the school from the community and also to demonstrate a planner's idea of how to conserve expensive space in the city.

There was a vagueness and misunderstanding, too, with respect to the health team's functions. It was not until the planning was in its second year that the fact came out that the health team was committed by contract only to provide free diagnostic services for the children in the two existing elementary schools. It was not contractually committed to provide free health care for them. This revelation came as a shock not only to members of the Advisory Council but to the Appley School staff of the Planning Office as well. Most of all it was a shock to the representatives from the School Department who regarded the provision of free health services as the main reason for the subcontract to the Medical Center. The difficulty was temporarily resolved when the Compton Medical Center volunteered to help find third party payment for those who could not afford to pay for their own health care and to give the care free of charge if no third party payment could be found. The Medical Center maintained that free health care for all the children in these two schools was far beyond its financial means. Nevertheless, repeated use of vague phrases concerning health services perpetuated the misunderstanding and caused trouble on several occasions.

The Appley School Project was slow in getting started. The year 1966-67 was devoted mainly to planning on paper. The resentment of some teachers at the two elementary schools that the Medical Center was making plans for health service delivery in their schools and in the New Appley School without consulting them presented a problem. One feature of the planned new Appley School which had high level support in the School Department drew much criticism from the teachers. The school was to be designed to accommodate a number of mildly handicapped children in such a way that they could be completely integrated with physically normal pupils. The teachers were particularly incensed that this would include a few pupils classified as "emotionally handicapped". Since the teachers had just recently succeeded in having separate classes set up for emotionally disturbed pupils, it appeared to them that their recently won gain was about to be undone in high-handed fashion by medical authorities who did not know about this recent change and who had not bothered to consult their wishes.

That the Medical Center had proceeded without first consulting the wishes of the teachers was true and the fact deprived them of important information as well as earning them a good deal of hostility. The principal was a member of the Appley School Advisory Group but he seldom spoke at its meetings. However, he made himself felt when the medical team tried to introduce its programs into the schools during

the second year of the project. To the team's surprise, the principal blocked their efforts in innumerable small but effecitve ways. He was irritated - as were many teachers - by the team's unconscious assumption that the school's limited resources of time, space, and personnel were completely at their disposal. They soon learned that they could do little or nothing in the schools without the consent of the principal -- not even with paper authorization from above.

Nevertheless, during 1967-68 the health team did test some of their plans on a pilot basis in the two elementary schools. They carried out physical and dental examinations of selected groups of pupils. These were fairly elaborate examinations in contrast to the rather perfunctory ones which are all the school doctor usually has the time to perform. Where a medical problem was found, the team attempted to contact the child's family and urge them to have it taken care of. This personal "follow-up" which was supposed to be one of the strong points of the program(in contrast to the note which is ordinarily sent to the family) turned out to be a rather weak point in the project. Almost all the work fell on the shoulders of one-bilingual Chinese-American. She not only had to reach and persuade the families, she had to arrange appointments for children to be seen at the Compton Medical Center if the families opted for treatment there. According to her account, she frequently received short shrift at the Medical Center because she was a person with no professional degree.

The Planning Office section of the Appley Project staff also carried out a pilot project in 167-'68. They tried out a social studies curriculum. However, they judged it to be unsuccessful. The materials were not appropriate for the children in these schools.

All this pilot work brought the Appley Project staff into contact with teachers, pupils and families of the community to a greater extent than before. In late spring they decided that the contact ought not to be allowed to lapse during summer vacation but should be used as a springboard for broadening community participation in the project. To that end two steps were taken: 1) a summer recreation program for children of the area was mounted in Palace Circle; and 2) the School Department and Medical Center jointly supplied funds to hire a community organizer for the project.

A young woman with unique qualifications was found for the organizing task. She was Chinese-American, born in Compton City, and had friends and relatives in Palace Circle and Chinatown. She was also a graduate student of social work and had some professional acquaintance with the techniques of community organization. She spent the summer learning all she could about the Appley School Project, discussing its purposes and methods with the residents of Palace Circle, Chinatown and Snug Harbor. She tried to make personal

contact with everyone who had had anything to do with the project and, in addition, with a large number of people who knew nothing of it. In this she had the invaluable assistance of Chinese-speaking friends and relatives who could reach a portion of the constituency whom no non-Chinese speaker could contact.

There are several versions of this young woman's summer activities, including her own. One version has it that she met with great apathy especially at organization meetings. As a result, one informant states, she made a deliberate decision to use a "Saul Alinsky" approach to mobilizing the community. She began telling residents that the Medical Center was planning for their children's future behind closed doors. She suggested to the community that the Medical Center did not know their needs, or their children's needs and that the community should participate in the planning of the new school.

Her own version of events suggests that this approach was not a strategy deliberately employed to overcome apathy, but represented her real feelings.

Whether the Alinsky "conflict" approach was completely sincere or not, it worked. There was a considerable amount of accumulated resentment against the Medical Center in the community. Though the Urban Renewal Authority, it had taken land housing low-income residents for its own expansion. Furthermore the Medical Center was more than anything else a congeries of highly specialized services which received most of its patients by referral from other physicians. It provided relatively little primary health care to the community. This, too, had long been resented.

Although earlier attempts by the staff to call a meeting of the community had failed to produce more than a pathetically small turnout, after a summer of laying the groundwork, the community organizer arranged to call a meeting of residents with members of the Appley School Project for August 15. The meeting was well-publicized. About 60 people attended. They heard the Project directors and staff members describe what they had been doing. They raised challenging, sometimes hostile questions. The central challenge was, 'Why had the staff taken so long to come to the community? By what right did they plan <u>for</u> rather than <u>with</u> the community?' An agreement was reached that evening that the Project staff and community residents would continue to meet together. A core group of 15 to 30 people did so -- weekly -- through the following year. This core group constituted itself the first Appley School Community Council.

The Appley School Community Council

Organizing

The question as to what kind of structure it should have occupied a large part of the Council's time for the next ten months. It was decided to permit each of the three residential communities to represent itself on the Council as it wished. In Snug Harbor a well-established neighborhood association chose delegates to represent it, giving each the power to vote the interests of the community as he saw them. In Palace Circle there were two political factions at the time the Council began its work. One of these was a group which had worked with the summer recreation program. The other faction labelled it "unrepresentative". The problem seemed to be resolved by the founding of a Palace Center Neighborhood Association which subsequently chose delegates to the Council.

Chinatown is not so much a geographically-bounded community as it is a hierarchy of organizations which represent the interests of Chinese-Americans of the Northeast region wherever they may reside. After meetings of these groups, the Chinese-American Civic Association was designated to choose delegates to the Council for Chinatown. Chinatown delegates decided to vote according to a unit rule.

There were usually three representatives of the Medical Center's Appley Project Staff at the Council meetings: the Project's educational consultant; the architect who was developing the environmental program for the school; and a young woman who was the Project's general administrator. These three wrestled with the question of whether they ought to act as a liaison between the Medical Center Planning Office and the communities or whether they ought to have a closer link with the community group which was taking form. They had to make clear to community representatives that they could speak only for the Appley Project staff and not for the whole of Compton Medical Center. They also had to communicate large amounts of information concerning their work of previous twenty months and the community representatives had to absorb the information all very rapidly. The process was not without mishaps.

At the end of September 1968, a community representative suggested a plan for a permanent Appley School Community Council. The Medical Center Appley Project staff developed the plan in the form of voting structure which gave them membership in the permanent group and made it possible for either the Project staff or

the representatives of the three communities to veto proposals of the other group. The community representatives rejected this proposal and countered with another which, after much discussion, was adopted. Chinatown had 5 votes; Palace Circle had 5; Snug Harbor had 3; the neighborhood at large had 1; and the Medical Center staff had 5. Decisions would be made by majority vote with the minority having the option to write a dissenting report.

By the time this voting structure was adopted, the legitimacy of the council's component groups for each other seemed reasonably well-established. Mutual trust had reached the point where they could work together. All parties had made concessions. The Medical Center staff became part of the Council without veto power. They agreed that all past decisions were subject to review, while reminding the Council that there was not unlimited time for the review process. The existing Advisory Council invited the new Community Council to send representatives to its monthly meetings. At the request of the Community Council, they also agreed to hold public meetings so that any community residents who wished to might attend.

The three communities had gone to some pains to choose representatives to the Council in a manner which the neighborhood and the Medical Center could accept as legitimate. They met the Medical Center's complaint that there were no funds for community work with the offer to work without funds. And the relatively well-attended weekly meetings during that first year demonstrated that the offer was not an idle one. From July, 1967, through the end of May, 1969, about 3000 volunteer manhours had gone into Council meetings and at least equal number into working subcommittee meetings. This leaves out of account the long hours of informal personal discussions within and between delegations which go far to explain the Council's early capacity to maintain a consensus.

In the seven months after it was created the formal voting mechanism was used only two or three times. Virtually every decision the Appley School Community Council made in that period was made by consensus. Where consensus could not be reached, decisions were postponed in the hope that consensus would be formed at a later date.

The consensus might seem surprising because the Council represented diverse neighborhoods. Snug Harbor residents are upper middle class and white. Palace Circle has a considerably lower average income than Snug Harbor and it is ethnically mixed: Chinese, Negro, Puerto Rican and white. Chinatown contains second and third generation families originating in the rural areas of southern China and also a recent wave of immigrants from Hong Kong. Incomes there range from low to quite comfortable.

However, the Council itself was more homogeneous in one respect than the communities it spoke for. A large proportion of the members had a college education and some had schooling beyond the bachelor's degree. Several were professional educators. Many had been active for some time in community action organizations. As it later turned out, the most important cleavage on the Council was ideological. Snug Harbor and Chinatown representatives tended to be relatively conservative in both political and educational matters and Palace Circle was relatively more radical.

One further organizational task was not accomplished until January, 1969. At the meeting of December 2 a member suggested that the teachers of the Appley School district be invited to join the Council. The proposal quickly gained majority support. There was debate as to how best to approach the school staffs. To understand the Council's concern over the proper approach, one must recall that this was the year of prolonged teachers' strikes in New York City and of the rift between the teachers' union and several New York communities. After some discussion the Council sent a letter to the State Department of Education, the District Superintendent, the Compton Teachers' Union, the district principal, and the district teachers, setting forth the Council's purposes and inviting membership of the district staff. There were informal meetings at the two elementary schools on the teachers' and principal's invitation. The principal invited the Council to make a formal presentation at a staff meeting in January. Some of the teachers were repelled by the slightly hippie hair and clothing styles of some Palace Circle members. On the whole, however, the Council presentation was well received by the teachers. Several of the K through 5 teachers later worked with the sub-committee on curriculum of the Council and one teacher became a permanently active Council member.

Nonetheless, the teachers never took up the voting membership in the Council which was offered them. An informant claims that this was partly due to discouragement of such official membership by the principal. He wanted to act cautiously since he was unsure what direction the Council would take and he was well aware that "headquarters" looked with a jaundiced eye at any group which talked of community control. Another obstacle was the difficult question of how the teachers could adequately represent themselves supposing they wanted to do so. There was a cleavage in viewpoint among them which roughly followed an age line. Nearly all the support for community participation came from young teachers, though by no means all the young teachers felt this way. And most of the hostility came from older teachers, although not all of the older teachers were hostile. The principal probably represented accurately the view of a majority of his staff when he discouraged official participation in the Council.

In the early period of its history the Council had gone through a conflict between the advocates of "community control", most of them from Palace Circle, and the other members o. the Council who wanted to take a moderate stance. The community control advocates made their ideological position quite clear, but they never proposed any practical way the Council could continue to exist without the services and money provided to it via the Appley School Project of the Medical Center which in turn was a subcontractor of the School Department. These resources would have been withdrawn had the Council adopted their position. The community control advocates were annoyed at the presentation made by Council members at the meeting with the teachers. They felt it was not quite honest, and they insisted at that meeting on proclaiming their own ideology. However,what they said appeared to have little effect and since they were without resources or pragmatic plans, the community control advocates gradually withdrew from the Council.

Writing the Planning Document

The voting structure once settled, the Compton Medical Center delegates to the Council, insistently reminded it of impending deadlines. The new Appley School was scheduled to open its doors in 1972 . There was only a limited amount of time for planning and for building. A planning document had to be submitted to and approved by the Public Construction Department (PCD) of the city which was responsible for putting up school buildings and also reviewed and approved by the School Department. The Appley School Project staff had written a first draft of the document which served as a jumping off point for the work of the Council.

If the multi-use urban building conceived by the Project staff were acceptable to the Council, it was necessary to demonstrate its feasibility by obtaining commitments from appropriate agencies to rent space and staff its various social service components. The Project staff had explored many possibilities for obtaining these "letters of intent" but much remained to be done.

To accomplish its tasks, the Council formed committees. A Committee on Budget and Personnel wrote a job description for two Council coordinators, advertised the position, screened applications, and made recommendations. The coordinators were hired in January.

A Committee on Curriculum was formed on November 18. It met, sometimes in the evening, sometimes in the afternoon at the Appley School for the convenience of its teacher-members, to

discuss in broad terms the kind of education they would like to see in the new Appley School.

A Committee on Goals and Policy was charged with the task of defining "a continuing process" through which the Council might be "permanently involved in the new Appley School". Occasionally this Committee was asked to work on a specific issue when the Council failed to reach consensus, e.g., to incorporate or not to incorporate.

A Recreation Committee was formed to review proposed recreational facilities for both the school and the community.

All committees wrote reports for eventual corporation into a planning document as also did the health team at the medical center. Finally, a Document Writing Committee took on the task of pulling the committee reports together. When it had produced a rough draft, this was circulated to the Council's mailing list of about 180 persons with requests for reactions. Several committee meetings were held for the same purpose. Despite the mailings the larger community did not turn out for these meetings. It was the same core group who always came to meetings, who attended and reviewed the document. The Document Committee then wrote the final draft, taking account of the critiques it had received.

In the final Council document, the physical plan of the school was little changed from what had been proposed in the draft written by the Appley School Project. The same was true of the overall concept of a community school with its accompanying social services. These included a primary health care unit, a day-care center, a drop-in center for teenagers, a gymnasium, pool and auditorium open for community as well as for school childrens' use, and a public reading room, or if possible, a public library.

The educational portion of the document was heavily influenced by the progressive-minded educators who were members of the Council and by the young teachers from the school district who worked with the subcommittee on curriculum. It recommended an "open school" with non-grading, individualized instruction, bilingual instruction, and team-teaching.

The document also recommended that a process whereby the community could participate in running the school, in staffing it, and in helping to develop its "evolving curriculum", be worked out with the School Department.

The Council made clear in the document that it believed special provision needed to be made for pre-service and in-service training of the staff for the new Appley School, since the educational philosophy and methods suggested were different from those prevailing in Compton City.

The Council, having agreed on the desirability of most of the components of the multi-use building suggested by the Appley Project staff (there was real controversy only over the character of the housing to be built), continued the work of finding agencies which would write letters of intent to rent, staff and operate them. This involved them in dealing with the Mayor's office about the possibility of a "little City Hall" in the building; with the Library Department; with the Department of Parks and Recreation; with United Day Care,and United Community Services about the projected day care center and drop-in center for children and young people; with the Educational Facilities Authority of the State about the potential housing for married medical students; with the Department of Health and Hospitals about space for primary health care and with many other agencies. Most of the work of dealing with these agencies necessarily fell on the shoulders of the paid coordinators and the Appley School Project staff.

In order to gain a first-hand impression of innovative educational methods, Council members visited a number of schools. These included experimental schools in the Compton Metropolitan area and elsewhere.

The Council also established contacts with a few organizations similar to itself in Compton City. The building which was Council headquarters immediately illustrated the shortage of recreational space for young people in the area. They knocked on the doors to ask if they could use it: Eventually it became a drop-in center and meeting place for a club of young men and another group of teenagers.*

Problems of Survival

In the spring of 1970, with its Planning Document written, the Council faced a new set of problems. The school would not be built until 1972. Meanwhile there would be negotiations with the Public Construction Department concerning selection of an architect. There would hopefully also be negotiations with the School Department concerning the staffing of the school and involvement of parents in the educational process. The Council needed funds to keep going. This was an old problem which became more acute with the passage of time. But the most important problem was sheer maintenance of the group and of its credibility as a spokesman for "the community".

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*Council headquarters was a condemned building which the Urban Renewal Authority rented to it for a dollar a year until such time as it could be taken down.

Funding

Unlike the Wadsworth-Madison Council, the Appley School Community Council never had large-scale funding either from the government or from a foundation, although it drew from both sources. Its funds came in dribs and drabs. In 1969-70 it led a literally hand-to-mouth existence with no one knowing where money for the telephone bill would be found next month. At times the coordinators worked without pay, accumulating claims on hoped-for future funds. In December, 1968, the Office of Innovative Planning (OIP) of the School Department made $3000 available to the Council for hiring staff. On February 21, the Appley School Project at the Medical Center signed a contract with the Council paying it $5332 for consulting services through June 30, 1969. (This included the original $3000.) Funding after June 1969, continued at about the same level. Some money was provided by the Public Construction Department of the city. Some was provided by a new demonstration project at Compton Medical Center. Some was provided by a local foundation. Since the Appley School Project in the Medical Center also had to seek new funding once its Title III contracts ended and also had trouble raising funds, it could not help much. Such funds as it managed to raise, it shared with the Council.

The observer does not know exactly why a major proposal to a large foundation was not written at this time. The coordinators claimed they lacked the skill to write a proposal and did not know where to seek funds. The Council was also in the unfortunate position for this era of serving neither a poverty neighborhood nor a black neighborhood. Many sources of funds were therefore closed to it.

Actually the Appley School Council's funding needs were modest compared to those of the Wadsworth-Madison Council. Appley Council members did not want their attendance at meetings to be paid. They believed that would be corrupting. Nor did many of them, including the coordinators, want a paid community organizer. The coordinators felt that broadening the Council's base in the community was the job of the members themselves and that it should be done by having transitional programs* which would interest parents.

In the spring of 1970, the Council's situation with respect to funds seemed desperate -- as it had before. Without new funds the coordinators could not continue to work much longer, and without

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*See below

the coordinators, the Council would die. By mid-summer, however, the Appley Project and the Council had found new funds and new support, and their future looked brighter than ever.

Incorporation

In order to receive funds the Council had to incorporate. This was accomplished without difficulty during the summer of 1969. There were differences within the Council concerning the looseness or tightness of the formal corporate structure but these were easily resolved.

Conflict

We have already noted that during the period of document writing there was such a consensus in the Council that the formal voting mechanism was never used. During that period the Council was sometimes engaged in conflict with groups outside itself, but there was little or no internal conflict. Beginning in July, 1969, however, internal conflicts developed in the Council and as they became increasingly severe, attendance dwindled. Rather than deal with conflicts chronologically here, we shall discuss them according to type.

Conflicts Between the Council and Compton Medical Center

The most important conflict between the Council and Compton Medical Center burst out unexpectedly at a Council meeting. However, it had a long background. Before the Council was ever formed the Appley School Project had hoped to put low-rent housing, or,at least, housing at moderate rentals,atop the multi-use building. A year of intensive exploration convinced the Appley Project staff that no private developer could be found to finance such housing. In the meanwhile a Higher Education Facilities Act was passed which made state government financing available for housing connected with higher education. Therefore, the Planning Office decided to put their long-planned housing for married medical students atop the Appley School Building. Council members, however, were not pleased about the decision. They were unconvinced that low-rent housing for neighborhood residents could not be financed. They took a very tough "show me" attitude on the subject and the Project Staff in fact went to considerable trouble to show them that no developers for low-rent dwelling units could be found.

At the meeting in question a Chinese delegate to the Council asked a member of the Appley Project Staff what would now be done with the site which had originally been intended for the married medical students' housing. They were told that this site - in the middle of Chinatown - would become a garage for 800 cars serving the staff of the Medical Center. The statement produced an explosion. The Chinese delegates said they would refuse to give their approval for any housing atop the multi-use building unless the Medical Center moved its parking garage elsewhere. There ensued weeks of direct negotiation between the organized Chinese community and Medical Center. The Council unanimously supported Chinatown's objections to the parking garage. Eventually the Medical Center, afraid of the embarrassment which a public protest from Chinatown might cause them, agreed to move most of the parking to another site.

Another disagreement centered on the hiring of a replacement for one of the Appley Project staff members. The Council had an agreement from the head of the Planning Office that it could "participate in the selection" of a replacement for this member. When the Planning Office head had made his selection, he proposed to send her to a Council meeting for approval or rejection. The Council protested that this was merely "veto power" not "participation in selection". It was agreed that the Council should have a chance to meet several other candidates for the position as well and express its preferences.

The head of the Planning Office arranged for a high-level Planning Committee at the Medical Center to invite representatives of the Council to one of its meetings in order that they might explain their position concerning the inadequacy of health services in the community. The Council regarded the manner of extending the invitation as unsatisfactory. They said they were being "summoned" to a meeting held at an "inconvenient daytime hour" to speak their piece once and for all. After debate in the Council it was decided that several members would go to the meeting but that, once there, they would make it clear to the Planning Committee that the issue was far too complex to be treated in such a one-shot fashion. They asked for a continuing channel of communication between the Council and a policy-making group at the Medical Center. They got it.

Lay-Professional Conflicts

A doctor who was a member of the Health Team received a large government grant to conduct a demonstration project in training local residents to be community workers. He came to the Council for help in recruiting trainees. As usual, the Council looked the gift horse in the mouth. They suggested that it was undesirable for members of the Medical Center to seek government grants for pro-

jects affecting the community without first consulting the community. They wanted to see the budget of the project. They wanted to know what part they could play in deciding how the several hundred thousand dollars of the grant would be spent. They obtained an agreement from the doctor that no one would be hired without consulting them. At a later date the Council discovered that the director of the project had hired two trainees and made "moral commitments" to two more without their knowledge. He claimed that he was under pressure from Washington to get going and that the Council's wheels turned too slowly. The Council more or less forced him to retract the decisions by threatening to sabotage the project in the community. In the long run, the director lost the grant which was not renewed by the Federal funding agency after the first year due to its poor relations with the community.

The PCD had promised that the Council could "participate in selecting" the architect for the Appley School complex. The Council interviewed several architectural firms and looked at examples of their work. Their final choice, however, was unacceptable to PCD. The PCD said their chosen firm was too small and inexperienced to do this large complex building. Thereupon the Council cried "Betrayal!" Eventually, a compromise was reached. The PCD's chosen architectural firm and the Council's would work together in designing the school. An agreement to that effect was worked out between the two firms. However, the situation contains the potential for continuing conflict. It is difficult enough for two architectural firms to coordinate their work, but it is even more difficult when they are supposed to clear with the Council every time a "decision" which deviates from the planning document must be made. Decisions are not made at specific points. They are involved in everything the architects do -- much of which is technically inaccessible to Council members.

The Council Versus the OIP

The first city agency to review the Council's document was a special arm of the School Department charged with administering Title III programs and with stimulating the formation of community groups to assist in planning new schools: the Office of Innovative Planning (OIP). A representative of this office had frequently sat in on Council meetings and had offered some advice.

After reviewing the document, OIP had several questions to ask of the Appley School Council and the Appley School Project. They wanted to know what had become of plans for the school to accommodate handicapped children which was one of the basic goals of the original proposal. The document briefly mentioned provision for exceptional children but only two paragraphs were devoted to the topic.

The subject was a sensitive one. In the first year of the Appley School Project,it had aroused the anger of the teachers in the district who saw themselves overwhelmed in the new Appley School by children with physical handicaps and emotional problems. While the Council was writing its planning document, some Chinese members repeatedly asked for reassurance that the handicapped children to be accommodated in the school would be only those found in the school district, rather than a bigger group recruited from the city at large. Nonetheless an addendum to the document was written describing in detail provisions to be made for 89 physically, emotionally and mentally handicapped children in accord with information and directives from School Department experts. Whereas the document originally had asserted that a school with individualized instruction would not need to isolate handicapped children from "normals" in order to meet their special needs, the addendum - on the advice of School Department specialists -- contained provisions for isolating such children. Most especially the addendum provided "special classes" for the mentally retarded although the Council - written document had said "Special classes will not exist in this school." In contrast to its aggressive behavior vis-à-vis the Medical Center, the Council capitulated to the School Department on this point of educational philosophy with no murmur.

OIP was also dissatisfied with the document's description of health services to be rendered to school children. While the document focused on decentralizing these services within the school, the addendum listed in detail the services to be rendered.

The OIP forwarded the revised document to the Superintendent of Schools together with a letter recommending, in somewhat lukewarm terms, that it be accepted. At the same time OIP remarked that certain key items in the document would need to be "carefully considered". These were: the proposed assignment of teachers to the school on a voluntary basis; the request for funded planning time for teachers; the idea that teachers, administrators and parents would cooperate in all decision-making; and the problem of funding the Council itself. In short the heart of the document from the Council's standpoint - its role in helping to run the school was gingerly singled out as a matter which would need to be "carefully considered". Needless to say, this came as no surprise. The Council had always anticipated that these very points were the ones which would require the most difficult negotiations.

Conflicts Within the Council

Conflicts with outside groups are a force for cohesion, but conflicts within the Council are a force toward dissolution. At just about the beginning of its second year-in July, 1969- consensus

within the Council showed signs of cracking. While coalitions were somewhat fluid, there developed essentially two factions: the radicals and the conservatives. The radicals consisted of the two coordinators and their supporters mainly from Palace Circle. In general, they were politically to the left of the other faction; they preferred looseness of structure to efficiency, at least on an ideological level. Chinatown's delegates and some of the Snug Harbor members belonged to the conservative faction. They preferred a tighter structure for the Council in the interest of efficiency.

Innumerable small matters divided these factions. For instance, their approach to the use of the building by young men and teenagers from the neighborhood was different. The radical faction was quite permissive while the conservative faction wanted to clamp down on loud parties, wild horseplay and so on. However the most important conflict between the two factions in the spring of 1970 had to do with their different judgments as to the proper focus of Council activity in the interim period until the school was built. The radicals wanted to have "transitional programs": a recreation program for young children; a drop-in center for teenagers; a neighborhood newspaper; and a day care center for preschoolers - supposedly as experimental models for the programs which would eventually be installed in the community-school complex. One of their purposes was to involve parents who were uninterested in meetings but who, they thought, might become involved in some of these other activities.

Although the fact was mentioned on only one or two occasions and for the most part passed unnoticed, a major reason why the chief coordinator wanted the transitional programs was that he hoped to develop the competence to run such programs from within the community. In fact it was his hope that the complex of services at the Appley School Center would be largely run by local community people rather than by outside professional agencies.

The conservatives, on the other hand, regarded the "transitional programs" as unnecessary and even destructive since they put excessive demands on the Council's small resources of manpower, money and time. They felt the Council should focus solely on its core activity of planning the new school. This meant working with the architects and the Public Construction Department on the building and, eventually, with the School Department on the educational program. Some of them wanted the coordinators to devote more energy to raising money,

The conflict between the factions often took the form of disagreement over time and money for transitional programs. For example: the coordinators wanted a recreation program. At several meetings the Council failed to make a clear decision concerning it. Meanwhile the chief coordinator hired personnel: work-study students who received part of their pay from the government. At a meeting he represented to the Council that these young people had been working several weeks without full pay. The Council voted to pay them and permitted the recreation program to continue, but several members felt they had been trapped into these moves by the coordinator's strategem. Later on there was difficulty with the recreation program because a severe disagreement developed between the coordinators and the recreation director they had hired.

Unpleasant personality conflicts occurred more frequently in Council meetings as money ran short and as the conservative faction became increasingly critical of the coordinators and the coordinators retaliated. Attendance at meetings dropped. Some active figures on the Council told others that they had withdrawn because of the personality problems.

A problem dating to the Council's early history reappeared: the question of "legitimate representation" of the participating communities. Palace Circle was divided into factions. The more conservative faction identified one coordinator of the Council as a leader of the more radical faction. So far as they were concerned the delegates from Palace Circle to the Council did not represent them nor did the community newspaper published by the Council represent their views. The delegates from Snug Harbor were seldom seen in the Council meetings any more. Only Chinatown remained united behind its delegates, though not altogether happy with the direction the Council had taken.

In May, 1970, just two weeks before the scheduled annual meeting of the corporation, a Council meeting spent most of the evening discussing whether the organization should dissolve. As we pointed out above, new funds were obtained by July and with the funds to work with, the Council revived and regained its cohesion.

Spinoff

How much influence the Appley School Council will eventually have on the character of the new Appley School is hard to assess. The concept of the multi-use building originated with the Director of the Appley School Project, although the Council's support for the concept has been useful. The educational ideas in the planning document are vague as to particulars but there is no mistaking their ideological tone. The document asks for an open, innovative school far more like a "free school" than like the traditional schools of Compton City.

Several of the most tangible concessions which the Council has won for the local community are not in the educational field at all. Compton Medical Center has been compelled to change its land use plans, specifically to move its parking facilities to a place more acceptable to its residential neighbors. Furthermore, it is clear that future decisions with respect to land use in the neighborhood will require consultation all around, since any member of the locality can at least cause discomfort for any other member whose land use behavior displeases it.

One outcome of the Council's existence is the network of personal relationships which now connects the three residential communities as they were not connected before. The network is fragile, however. If its members remain in the area, they are potentially able to mobilize spokesmen for all three communities to act collectively on any issue that concerns them all. However, unless the Council persists as an organization, constantly renewing this network, many of its present members will eventually move away and the potential for collective action will be attenuated.

We described above how a permanent channel of communication between a policy-advisory committee at Compton Medical Center and the Council, concerning health services to the community, was begun. This was the Monthly Circle which met to exchange views on how the Medical Center could better serve the community. The meetings opened up a huge area of grievance in Chinatown. Health services in the neighborhood were generally bad. There were no family doctors. Residents had to go to hospital clinics for primary health care if they were to get any at all. The Compton Medical Center was severely criticized: for failing to provide primary health care to its neighbors; for being an impenetrable, unfriendly bureaucratic maze, especially to Chinese-speakers; for not recruiting enough Chinese students to medical school. Inside the Medical Center a new Committee on Community Health was forming to wage battle for those doctors who wanted to practice community medicine against those who wanted the Medical Center to remain as it was -- giving first-rate treatment in a few specialized fields. The proponents of community medicine found themselves advocating change inside the Medical Center against stiff opposition. But when they faced the community, they were accused of not accomplishing change nearly fast enough.

The Monthly Circle made some progress. Community members drew up a list of high priority health needs and the medical administrators took what steps they felt they could toward meeting them. For example, they began a monthly clinic to be staffed in part by Chinese doctors, where elderly Chinese could be seen by appointment and with a skilled interpreter at hand.

The Medical Center administrators suggested that the Council might consider becoming a channel through which aggrieved individuals could get a hearing at the top policy level of the Center. This was one more community function which the Council might have performed had it had the necessary resources. Instead the Chinese American Compton Association formed a Task Force for Resolution of Grievances with six committees, one of which was a Health Task Force headed by a Council delegate.

The dialogue between the Medical Center and Chinatown is certain to continue whether or not the Appley School Council survives. Contrary to past custom, the Chinese will carry on this dialogue in an aggressive way. Experience on the Council has probably created one or two new leaders in the Chinese community and it has taught these men that the old Chinese pattern of keeping the community to itself and avoiding conflict with outsiders is not necessarily the most profitable course. Demands and threats of unfavorable publicity forced the Medical Center to abandon its plan for a parking garage in the middle of Chinatown. Chinatown will not forget the lesson.

THE WADSWORTH-MADISON COMMUNITY SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL*

Setting

The black community of Compton City represents today roughtly 18% of the city's total population and 30% of its school-age population. Like other black people in the urban North, this community is residentially segregated. In 1960, 37% of its Negro citizens lived in census tracts which were 70% or more Negro. Segregation has increased since then. The largest black area was 44% non-white in 1960 and 60% non-white in 1968. Segregation of black pupils into predominantly black schools is also sharp. In 1968, 68% of black youngsters were attending schools where half or more of the pupils were black and 35% were attending schools which were 90% black.

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*Our observations of this group began in May, 1969, and ran through May, 1970. Council documents and reconstructions of past events were kindly supplied by Council members. We also had the benefit of reading two unpublished reports narrating the events of the Council's first year.

In 1968, twenty-seven percent of the households in the largest predominantly black area had annual incomes below $3000. Median family income in this area in 1968 was $4631.

Genesis

The founding of the Wadsworth-Madison School Community Advisory Council was a product of University initiative, federal funds and educational ferment in the black ghetto. A small parents' group working for educational improvement had formed around the Madison Junior High School in the late sixties. At the Wadsworth middle school a University research team was making a longitudinal study of character development in black adolescent boys. The Wadsworth had long been a school in trouble. An outbreak of disruptive behavior in the spring of 1967 led -- as such outbreaks had before -- to mutual recriminations between the school staff and the community. The community felt that the predominantly white school staff was at best insensitive to the needs of their pupils and, at worst, racist. The staff blamed the families in the community for sending to school children so uncontrolled in their behavior that teachers' energies were dissipated just in maintaining order.

One of the University researchers who had grown up in the neighborhood served as a bridge to bring together the school staffs, the community, and the University. To make their coalition durable, this group sought funds. A University professor with the collaboration of other members of the group wrote an application to the Ford Foundation for $39,000.

In the meanwhile, in March 1968, the United States Office of Education (USOE) called together representatives from many cities to hear its new Central Cities Task Force proposal. This was a plan to use Title III funds in inner city areas to promote cooperation between schools and the communities they served. The stipulation that school authorities receiving these funds were to work with residents chosen by the community at large followed the pattern of Federal legislation of the sixties. The stipulation was crucial for the Wadsworth-Madison Council. Without it, it is unlikely they would ever have been accorded the recognition they received from the School Board of Compton City. Even with the lure of Federal funds, the School Board approved submission of a proposal by a vote of only 3 - 2.

The School Department's first choice of area for spending the Task Force money was a multi-ethnic, multi-class neighborhood. Only the combined pressure of the black community, the University, and Washington eventually forced the Compton City school authorities

to choose the Wadsworth-Madison schools and their feeder elementary schools as the area for the project. The proposal submitted was much like the one originally intended for the Ford Foundation except that the budget was now $1,500,000 over a three year period.* Its key features were:

1. It claimed only an advisory role for the community council;

2. it said that the schools should serve youngsters of nursery school age and adults as well as the regular pupil population. In this sense they should be "community schools";

3. it proposed to work within the existing school system, suggesting no fundamental change in its structure.

Even though the proposal was vague about redistribution of decision-making power, a member of the School Committee who voted against it, stated that, in effect, the proposal gave the community "control" over education.

The First Phase

Beginning in July 1968, the Council's first year was occupied with a struggle for power. The small group of involved community members were internally divided between leaders demanding rapid movement toward community control and the majority of Council members who wanted to take a more moderate course in order not to risk the project. At the same time the Council was battling the School Department and School Board to obtain black principals for the Wadsworth and Madison schools. School officials took the position that principals could only be appointed from the rated list - as they always had been. The list contained no black names. School officials said that they would not violate the merit system. The Teachers' Union censured the Council for taking a position which would by-pass the list. Threats of violence and threats by the Council to dissolve itself were successful in forcing the school officials to appoint two black teachers who were not on the principal's list as principals in the Madison and Wadsworth. In the course of the struggle, the Wadsworth School was repeatedly disrupted and closed,

*The budget was subsequently cut as were many Title III projects.

On one occasion the disruption may have been promoted by community control forces who made attempts to "take over" the Wadsworth and one feeder elementary school presumably to place them under "community control". The takeover attempts were easily thwarted by the School Department, especially since they did not have Council support. The community control forces then withdrew - alienated from the Council which, in their view, had been co-opted from the first by the Compton school system. However, they had had an effect. The Council would not have taken an intransigent stand for black principals had it not been under pressure from them. The black principals were appointed only pro tem. It is not yet clear that their appointment has created a lasting precedent in the Compton City school system.

Although the Teachers' Union censured the Council on the question of the principal's list, it took no action. At a later date it worked with the Council in seeking better conditions for pupils and teachers inside the Wadsworth School. The cooperative venture began a dialogue between the Council and the Union. When the President of the State Negro Educators' Association became principal of the Wadsworth School, he also became part of this dialogue. In 1970 the Union supported the Negro Educators' demand for more black male administrators in the system. * The black community in turn supported the Teachers' Union in its strike during May, 1970. Many of the teachers' demands in that strike were for better school conditions which would benefit pupils as well, community spokesmen said.

Given the power struggle during its first year, the Council had little energy or time for any activities save those necessary for survival. The mundane problems of finding quarters, hiring staff, and getting the necessary approvals for actual transfer of funds granted were made harder by bureaucratic delays at the federal and city levels. For instance, although the project was approved in Washington at the end of June, 1968, funds to pay Council members, who received $7 an hour for attendance at meetings, were not received until the end of December. Although the Council found suitable office space in August, the lease did not get all the required clearances from the city until the end of September. The School Board was slow to put through approvals of the Council's staff appointments, although it was tacitly understood that the Council would have a free hand in staffing itself.

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*There are 250 black teachers in Compton City, only 40 of them men. The city never goes outside its own system for administrators. They are all promoted from the ranks of the city's teachers. Thus, if these demands are met, a goodly number of black male teachers in Compton City will be promoted to administrative posts.

Delays of this sort are so familiar as to seem trivial. But to a new organization with only three years in which to prove its effectiveness they can be destructive. Often the Council members thought delays might have been deliberate and were actually left in some doubt as to the Council's continued existence. On one occasion community aides who were supervising a "subsidiary center" for 30 or so of the most "troublesome" Wadsworth students became demoralized - partly because they had worked for weeks without pay and partly because teachers promised to the Center had not yet appeared. Without warning, they all called in sick one Monday. Their 30 pupils invaded the main Wadsworth building, went on a rampage, and threatened teachers with violence.

The Council's first budget allocation covered only July through January. The government required it to write a proposal for a continuation grant in order to obtain the balance of the $500,000 promised for the first year. This second proposal had to be reviewed by the Board of Superintendents, the School Board and USOE. General approval was given in March but the reviewers wanted further detail concerning the proposed educational programs. As a result, only 2 of 7 educational programs were implemented by June and the greater part of the promised first year funds were not expended.

Nor did the Council find time until March to hold elections. The Interim Council was a self-appointed body. It had planned to hold elections in the autumn of 1968 but it became so immediately embroiled in struggle that it could not. Some preparatory work was needed before the community could vote: publicity about the Council; orienting lectures for potential candidates; mobilization of eligible voters. The Council spent $4000 on the election but the pressures on it were so great that the groundwork was poorly done. Only a little over 4% of those eligible to do so actually voted. Several candidates ran unopposed.

The new Council included six parents from the Madison district, six from the Wadsworth district, and one from the districts of each of ten feeder elementary schools. The principals of the six elementary school districts as well as the Wadsworth and Madison principals ex officio and one teacher each elected by the staffs of Wadsworth and Madison were also voting members. The elected parents chose six additional voting representatives of "the community" and among these they included two men from the University and a community resident all of whom had been on the Interim Council. In April, 1970, the Council decided to add one student from the Wadsworth School and one from the Madison to its voting membership.

The postponement of elections resulted in a serious loss to the Council. There was little overlap in membership between the elected Council which took office in April, and the Interim Council, which had acquired some hard and useful experience. Time was lost while the members of the new Council absorbed the meaning of past events in the Council's history. Political know-how was lost as well. Shortly after it assumed office the new Council - elected presumably for one year - voted to keep itself in office for the duration except for replacements. The decision was necessary to prevent a repetition of this kind of waste.

The Council had two educational programs under way by June, 1969. Project Read, a commercially produced program which the Council bought, was operating in several schools. The subsidiary center mentioned above was attached to the Wadsworth School. Some recommendations for improvements at the Wadsworth School came out of a conference of the staff, parents and students which took place on November 6th, 7th and 8th - while the school was shut down due to disruptions. These recommendations included student monitors, separate deans for boys and girls, more field trips, and more emphasis on black studies. The proposals were implemented. This was the sum of the Council's educational activities dur.ng its first year. In toto $30,000 out of a budget of $150,000* was spent on them.

Another major goal of the first year was community organization. The Council wanted to mobilize the community around participation in educational decisions affecting its children. A neighborhood organization was subcontracted for the sum of $25,000 to do the organizing. The consensus among Council members is that it failed. The low turnout for the election of Council numbers is a reasonable indicator that the organizers had not stirred broad community interest. However, the contracting organization was not solely to blame. Apathy in the community and conflict among its leaders played a part

*While the budget originally planned for the year was $500,000, the total amount actually spent in 1968-69 was $150,000. The Council lost the difference because of its difficulties. It could not, in just one year, mobilize to spend $500,000 in ways acceptable to the funding agency.

The Elected Council

The new Council was formally installed in office at a ceremony in the Madison School on May 4, 1969. Title III administrators from the State Department of Education; Compton City School Department representatives; a representative of the Mayor's office; and many friends of the Council attended. The ceremony included speeches, entertainment and a reading of each new Council member's name as she ascended the platform to be greeted by officials. There were about 200 people in the audience, mainly from the community and the staffs of its schools.

On this occasion an informant talked with the observer at length, analyzing the problems of the Wadsworth and Madison Schools and describing the composition of the new Council.* Many of the parent and community members, informant said, were relatively uneducated women who had recently been on welfare. The ceremony was a great occasion for them since they had never before had public recognition of any sort. The Council post, which paid $7 an hour for attendance at meetings, would raise their prestige and possibly their authority in their own children's eyes. The ceremony also put them in a position where they would have to work at the job since everyone now knew who they were.

Observation at the meetings suggests that informant was correct. Some parent members of the Council were at least high school graduates, well spoken and articulate. Others seemed to have had relatively little schooling. Only 10 of the 25 parent

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*Informant's analysis of the problems was familiar. Many families in the community neglected their children almost totally. The school represented "a world apart" for the children which they came nowhere near to grasping. They either fell into a chasm between home and school or else found some kind of solace in their peer groups where they were great conformists. The schools had thus far made little or no effort to meet them "where they were". For this the informant blamed the Compton School System, emphatically including black teachers who were long-term members of it. (Informant was black but not originally from Compton City.) Innovative young teachers, whether white or black were forced out of schools by principals who were frightened of anything not conventional in Compton City, he said. The system, for instance, insisted on maintaining "distance" between teachers and pupils. Young, recently-trained teachers often try, on the contrary, to cultivate close personal relationships with pupils, and this is explicitly frowned on by old-time Compton schoolmen.

members spoke with any frequency at meetings. At a Council meeting in the spring of 1970, parent member after parent member refused to take the chair--although all the members were by then well acquainted with each other--apparently out of lack of confidence that she could chair a meeting. The lady who finally accepted did, in fact, need a project staff member constantly at her side to remind her of parliamentary procedure. She frequently misunderstood what was said on the floor and misformulated the alternatives before the meeting. As a result meetings under her chairmanship did not hold the members' attention and tended to degenerate into numerous small gabfests.*

Focus on Jobs

A major concern of the elected Council during its first year was jobs for its members. The Council's existence provided opportunities for a few people in the neighborhood to move into "jobs with a future". The first jobs the Council provided were positions on its own staff. These included the post of Project Director, Assistant Project Director, and Secretary. The two black principalships were next. The Wadsworth principal also arranged to promote a black male teacher to an administrative post in the school. This teacher later became the third black male principal in Compton City. The first Council Project Director, who had also been a teacher, later moved from his Council position to become assistant principal at the Madison School.

The Council recommended several of its members as community aides to work in the schools. The School Board had to approve these recommendations. Some were vetoed. But for a number of Council members the positions provided additional renumeration at $3.00 an hour. During school vacations aides were paid for attendance at training sessions. They also asked for and received some fringe benefits similar to those accorded to teachers. Free courses were given for aides, some of them at local colleges. They seemed popular. One Council member grumbled to the observer that there had been all sorts of courses for Title III aides and only one for Title I aides like herself. Toward the end of the year, some of the aides were enrolled in an EPDA program which proposed to give them college courses, college credit for their practical work in the schools, and eventually to award them a B.A. and a qualification to teach.

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*The importance of a skillful chairman in making a meeting productive was visible over and over in the course of this study. We saw the same body chaired by good and by poor chairmen and the contrast was great.

Thus the Council provided job training and job opportunity for a goodly proportion of its members. Since there were only 37 members altogether (in April, 1970), the absolute number involved was small.

Educational Programs

The Council served more as a channel for the diffusion of educational innovations than as an originator of educational programs. A frequent format for meetings devoted the first hour to guests, invited or self-invited, who described educational innovations in effect elsewhere and who frequently asked the Council's participation or suggested that it adopt these innovations in its district schools. Not infrequently the guests were salesmen promoting a commercially packaged educational "product". Tutoring, reading, and testing programs -- and individualized instruction, team teaching and programmed instruction are examples of the innovations described to Council members at their meetings. Members traveled to other cities as well as around their own metropolitan area to observe innovative programs in action. During the Council's second year, Project Read and the Subsidiary Center at the Wadsworth School continued. The chief new educational project of the year was introduced by the University. It was a team teaching project in which the teams were to consist of teacher trainers from the University's School of Education, of teachers already in the district schools, and of paraprofessionals. Each of the three members of the team would presumably help to upgrade the others' skills -- the teacher trainers because they were master teachers and the local teachers and paraprofessionals because they were closely acquainted with the needs of this group of pupils. The Council decided that this project should begin in an elementary school because up until that time four-fifths of the educational expenditure had gone into the middle school and junior high.

The Council affected education indirectly as well as through the explicitly educational programs it adopted. When the black principal of the Wadsworth moved into that position from an experimental school, he did so with assurances from the School Department of a free hand in staffing the Wadsworth. He brought with him several experimental school teachers who took a cut in salary to come. He also recruited teachers whom he wanted and who wanted to work with him from all over the city.

An informant told the observer that two new principals -- one white and one black--had made an enormous difference in their own schools "because they made the children like and respect them." So far as informant was concerned, it was personnel of this quality rather than "fancy innovations" which would produce a change of

educational quality in the district. Her comment underlines the indirect effect of the Council's existence on school personnel. One of the earliest events which occurred after the Council was formed was a request for transfer out of the district from the white principals of Wadsworth and Madison. It was the need to replace these two principals which opened the fight for black appointees. But what made the white principals request transfer? Did they feel formation of the Council was a vote of "no confidence" in them? Did they feel unable to work with a community group? It is a part of the Compton City school tradition to keep parents, like children, "on the other side of the desk".* Principals trained in this tradition may find themselves unable to change. Therefore, they opt out of the district. At the same time some teachers who are eager to work with a community group opt in. This was the case with the teachers who transferred into the Wadsworth with its new principal. Thus the very existence of a community council produced a small turnover in personnel, making the school staffs more amenable to work with the community.

Lay-Professional Tension

Professionals were a minority of the voting members of the Council but they dominated its proceedings. Among the "professionals" we are here including the two junior high and middle school principals who attended and voted regularly and the two University representatives. Some of the elementary school principals were not in the professionals' informal caucus or else were on the fringes of it. The Project Director and Assistant Director also appeared to be on the fringe. Altogether the informal professionals' caucus numbered about eleven people out of a Council numbering 37.

Tension between the parent members of the Council and the professional schoolmen appeared at the first meeting after the installation ceremony and continued throughout the second year. In this conflict the teacher representatives were usually, though not invariably, on the side of the parents. Parent informants repeatedly told the observer that they resented the professionals' "takeover" of the Council. They complained that a caucus of the key principals, the University representatives and some of the Project Staff met to

*An interview with an official in the Compton City Office of Innovative Planning contains a long discussion of this tradition. The official had been a teacher in the system for many years.

make the decisions and then "present them for us to rubber stamp". Interestingly, the parents did not seem to have a caucus of their own although a teacher once jokingly suggested it in the elevator while a group of parents and teachers were leaving a meeting. The parents attributed continued apathy of the community toward the Council in part to its domination by professionals. Late in the year some parent members suggested that other parents on the Council were unwilling to speak up for fear they would lose their jobs as paraprofessional aides in the schools.

The professionals were seriously dedicated to the idea of community participation in education. They believed that the laymen in this community would acquire organizational competence and knowledge of education gradually, through experience. They conducted themselves with respect for the community and with sensitivity. The tension, however, was inevitable. After the lay advocates of community control -- some of whom embodied high professional and organizational skills -- withdrew from it, the Council was left dependent on its professional educator members for essential services. The most important services were proposal-writing and provision of technical information: about jobs and job programs; about education innovations; and about the implications of federal legislation. The professionals were an indispensable link between the larger world and those community members whose lives were circumscribed by the neighborhood.

It was natural that the professionals felt a need to talk with each other informally about Council affairs and it was unavoidable -- given the large gap in perspective between them and many (though not all) parent members -- that they would be perceived as a cabal. They were aware of the grievance and tried to allay it. For instance, in 1970, subcommittees which collectively included every Council member were charged with drafting the new proposal for the Council's third year. This was a direct response to complaints that the parent members had played no part in drafting the second year proposal.

Lay-professional tension came to the floor of the Council in several forms. On one occasion some parents questioned a request for financing a convention trip by several professionals. They wondered why so many need to go. They wanted to know why some parents could not go as well. They asked why the Council had received no reports from professionals whose trips to conventions had been financed in the past. A principal, who was angered at insinuations that convention attendance was a paid vacation, spoke about what hard work it was and how useful to him and his colleagues in keeping up with educational developments. Parents interpreted his remarks to imply that they lacked the capacity to understand what went on at a convention. The principal on the other hand meant that they lacked the necessary <u>training</u> to understand such material.

This disagreement underlies the lay-professional conflict in the field of education generally. Laymen constantly question whether the functions of educators require anything more than native intelligence and educators insist that their functions can be performed only by those specially trained for them.

On another occasion the most articulate community representative on the Council made a motion that the Council visit the junior high and middle schools. The motion was accompanied by a dramatic speech to the effect that the Council was having no impact on the schools, that the schools were chaotic, and that the children were not learning. The speaker seemed to blame the professional educators. One principal defended his own school claiming that it was educationally effective. A black teacher spoke. She said that the charges were true: "We have a blackboard jungle". In part she blamed teachers who were "not interested" but she put greater blame on parents for not raising their children properly. Parents were bitter at charges of this kind.

The emotional tone of meetings was frequently acrimonious. One evening opened with a letter of resignation from an officer of the Council. It gave no reason for the abrupt decision nor would the officer, who was present, either reconsider or explain. However, she let her friends know that she was "disgusted" with the Council. This member was deeply annoyed by both the professionals' "takeover" and what she described as the "babyish" behavior of some Council members. Later the same evening the Secretary - mistakenly believing she had been criticized from the floor by a professional member -- resigned dramatically on the spot. This meeting left some members with the feeling that the Council was becoming demoralized.

The lay-professional split in the Wadsworth-Madison Council was not a split between the University representatives and the community, nor was it a split along racial lines. There were two problems. One was the community's resentment of the extent to which decision-making gravitated to the professionals and the other was frustration at the Council's alleged failures: its failure to secure a broad base in the community; its failure to have much impact on the schools; and its internal bickering. All these situations were openly and frequently discussed. *

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*The challenge to professional authority in the Council was relatively mild. More serious challenges of this sort have occurred elsewhere. For example, a community health group formed around a neighborhood health center in Compton City demanded that the center mount a special campaign of examinations for breast cancer in women. The doctors at the center said these examinations were a waste of money since all community residents were examined yearly in any case

Evaluation

As under all Title III contracts an evaluation of the Wadsworth-Madison Project was required by the government. The question of evaluation came up in Council meetings in the spring of 1970. Eight thousand dollars had been budgeted and bids solicited. One of these bids was for $18,000 and two were within the budget. Of the latter two one came from a New York City firm and one from a firm in the neighborhood. Outlines of evaluation proposals were circulated in the Council but the membership decided that these were not enough. They resolved to invite both bidders to present personally a description of what their evaluations would entail. Several Council members were puzzled and skeptical about evaluation. One principal pointed out that Project Read -- about the only educational program which was present in any large number of the district schools, had been in them only a few months -- too soon for evaluation. One Council member wanted an evaluation apparently to "prove" her view that the Council was ineffective. The professionals who knew a good deal about the complexities of evaluation research were painfully aware that, given the complex history of the Council, the amount budgeted, and the late entry of the evaluators on the scene an "evaluation" of the Wadsworth-Madison Council was absurd. All the more so if a forced attempt was made to apply conventional evaluation methods.

The Wadsworth-Madison Council has one more school year of federal funding to go under its ESEA Title III contract. After that, the Superintendent of Schools has said, he "hopes" the School Board will take over the financing of the project. That seems unlikely given Compton City's shortage of money.

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and the additional examination had only a low statistical probability of turning up even one undiscovered case. The community insisted, nonetheless, and insisted as well on the principle that it had a right to a say with respect to priorities for health expenditures.

A still more striking example appeared on Page 1 of the New York Times for August 26, 1970. There it was reported that a doctor at Lincoln Hospital was 'fired' by a community group related to the hospital. As a result 24 of 28 physicians in the gynecological and obstetrical service walked off their posts and the hospital said it would have to terminate this service.

THE FREEMONT COUNCIL FOR COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Setting

In March of 1967 the Compton City School Board submitted a plan to the State Department of Education which had been pressing it hard to eliminate racial imbalance in the city's schools. The initial stage of the plan called for the Public Construction Department (PCD),the city agency responsible for construction of all public buildings, to build 12 schools. The first five of them were to be large elementary schools on the boundaries between white and non-white neighborhoods, recruiting pupils from both. A federal grant under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was sought and received for planning these "fringe-area" schools. Title III provides financial assistance to public school boards in order to "stimulate and assist in the provision of needed educational services not available in sufficient quantity or quality . . . (and to). . . assist in the development of exemplary educational programs to serve as models for regular school programs." (Public Law 89-10, April 11, 1965).

The first three of the five schools were to be built in the Freemont section of Compton City. Freemont is part of a Model City area which is 54% black.* Twenty-four percent of the population has a yearly income below the poverty level ($3000) with the median family income being $5500. The unemployment rate is 7.2%. The school dropout rate is 36% higher than the city average. The majority of schools are over 90% black. Fifty percent of the housing is substandard. The rate of change of residency is unusually high. In 1960, 45% of the population of the Freemont section was living in the same residence it had lived in in 1955, as compared to 50.9% in the city as a whole. Although later figures for the area are not available, it is safe to assume that residential mobility is now even higher in Freemont: only 10% of the 1960 population of 112,504 was non-white. The percentage had risen to over 50% by 1968. Nineteen-sixty-eight data show that the majority of whites in Compton City have lived in their current homes for five years or more, while the majority of blacks have moved within the past five years. Since residential mobility is higher for blacks than for whites and since the population of blacks in the area has gone up, residential mobility must have risen as well.

The first new school to be planned and built in the Freemont section with the help of Title III funds was to be a replacement for the 64-year old Warren School. It was to house 1000 children in

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*1967 figures.

grades K-5. A revision of the attendance lines would combine 300 children from the 86% non-white Luther School with the 678 children in K-5 of the 98% white Warren to obtain a new school, on the Warren site, 70% white and 30% non-white.

The second school was to replace the 72-year old Luther and the 95-year old Everett on a site near the border of these attendance districts. Taken together these schools had 663 K-5 students, 86% of whom were non-white. A revision of attendance lines would draw 537 children from two almost totally white schools, Kennedy (99%) and Jones (99%), to form a new 1000 pupil school which would be 60% white and 40% non-white.

The third school was to replace the Lake School (39% non-white), the Ross School (12% non-white) and the Florence School (30% non-white). A revision of attendance lines would combine the 852 K-5 students from these 3 schools with about 250 non-white students from the 95% non-white Oak School, and perhaps some white children from nearby schools, to form a new 1100 pupil school which would be 60% white and 40% non-white.

Attendance lines were set for the new schools with the understanding that they might need to be altered because of the influx of blacks into the district. At present in 1970, the Luther has become 96% non-white, the Ross 28% non-white, the Florence 49% non-white and the Oak 99% non-white, so new attendance lines will have to be set.

The Public Construction Department felt that the architectural and educational specifications for the new schools should be developed together. Because PCD had the responsibility for the architectural specifications and the School Department had the responsibility for the educational specifications, PCD realized that the two departments would have to work closely together.

According to an informant, PCD felt that the School Department's well-known conservatism disqualified it from planning innovative schools. There was however one section of the School Department, the Office of Innovative Planning (OIP), which had been created specifically to work with Title I and III projects. PCD consulted with the head of this department who suggested that PCD find an outside contractor to develop both the educational and architectural specifications for the schools. He put PCD in touch with a Professor at the University School of Education. In May of 1967 PCD signed a contract with this Professor giving him and a newly assembled "ad hoc Task Force" the responsibility for developing, in cooperation with the School Department and other "concerned city and state agencies" the physical and educational specifications for the 12 new schools.

The Task Force consisted of five professors on the faculty of the University and a number of specialists, candidates for the Ph. D., and other graduate students. Their administrative officer was given office space in the PCD.

According to an informant from the University, the Task Force has virtually free rein to plan as it wished, since neither the contract nor the School Department contributed anything more than the lot sizes, the grades and the number of children. The Task Force wanted to draw up an excellent plan but were never sure how much of the plan would be implemented. If and when the PCD accepted the plan, this acceptance would only mean that the contract had been fulfilled. It would not mean that the specifications must be used.

The Document

By July of 1967 the Task Force had produced a planning Document entitled Design Requirements and Limitations for Three Elementary Schools in Freemont. The Document set as its goal "individualized instruction: the fulfillment of each unique child's inborn potential for intellectual, social, physical, and civic accomplishment." (The Document) To accomplish this, it conceived of the 3 schools as a package. Each a quarter mile away from the others in a triangular pattern, the schools were to accommodate 3100 K-5 pupils. The plan called for an interchange bus system so that children from all of the schools could use the special facilities of each: the plan of the first school, the Warren, called for elaborate science facilities; the second, the Avery, called for extensive physical education facilities including a pool; and the third, the Atkins, called for a theatre. The bus system would also enable the students to take advantage of the resources of Compton City. The physical plants were designed in a contemporary, open plan with movable partitions, bright colors and modern equipment. Educational innovations in the plan included partial non-grading (every 2 grades together) and team-teaching, and were designed to encourage "the assumption of responsibility by individuals for their own learning." (The Document).

Each school was to have a large "Community Room" and a "Community Office." A house was to be left standing at each site for additional community use. The designation of the schools as "Community Schools" was tacitly accepted by all concerned from the very beginning. The Task Force is credited with originating it, but it was a common term. The Urban Renewal Authority used it and even the conservative School Board accepted the term - "like they accept motherhood," according to a member of the Task Force. The School Board did not accept the Task Force's definition however.

While the School Board and the School Department were thinking in terms of a "Lighted Schoolhouse" - i.e. a 24-hour school available after school hours to the community, - the Professor envisioned this and more. The school was to be a resource for all members of the community for education and recreation, and although there would not be "community control", there would definitely be "more participation than is usual in a PTA." (The Professor) The community rooms and offices were put into the school so community people and school people would be "rubbing elbows all the time."

Unlike Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act which requires cooperation with the local agency responsible for the community action program established under Title II of the Economic Opportunity Act, Title III of ESEA requires only that the local educational agency consult with "the cultural and educational resources of the area." Although there is no specific mention of community organizations or antipoverty groups in this part of the Act, there was pressure from Washington to involve them. The Task Force's list of things to be researched at the very beginning included "involvement of community leaders in planning."

There is great disagreement as to what was actually done to involve the community before the planning Document was completed. An informant at PCD says they hired an expert in community involvement to work with the Professor but his expertise turned out to be minimal. The expert, still at the University, says that three people worked one day a week for 6 months arranging meetings through the Antipoverty Agency and trying to form committees and to work with local groups. The head of OIP says he asked the person who had worked with the community on the plans for another school to go into the Freemont community and assess opinions.

The Freemont Steering Committee

The Document was presented to PCD in July of 1967. It was accepted by PCD and the School Department in fulfillment of the contract, but neither PCD nor the School Department committed itself to carrying out the recommendations in the Document.

The next step, as PCD saw it, was to discuss the Document with the community. It called the Freemont Antipoverty Agency and asked it to arrange a meeting of agency people: members of local groups (e.g. neighborhood associations, private school boards) and officials from local offices of national agencies (e.g. the antipoverty agency, the Model Cities Board, the Urban League, and the Multi-service Center).

The meeting took place before the month was out and, according to community informants, "the whole thing broke open . . . (PCD). . . couldn't understand why the community couldn't read. . . a 300 page document in one hour. . . and decide whether they liked it." The community people were angry because the Professor "hadn't consulted the community earlier in the planning process." That any community work had been done by the Task Force, OIP, the School Department and PCD was denied by those at the meeting. Apparently the community work had not reached very far into the community.

There were a number of reasons for this. OIP and PCD had no experience in working with local community people. According to an informant at PCD, this was their first try and it taught them "how not to do it. We learned from our mistakes and now try to fit what we do to the community." Some communities have "comprehensive organizations we can work with," and in some "we have to form those organizations." Determining just who is the community is often a problem, especially in areas with fragmented groups and high residential mobility.

A member of the Task Force adds that there was limited time and money and a lot of work that should have been done in the community never was done. Another problem presented itself as well: conflict developed within the University School of Education itself. According to the community expert working with the Task Force, some people at a high level in the University wanted to be cautious about how much power was given to the community. This caution put the community workers in a bind because it was interpreted by the community as exclusion. One memo from the Professor to the Dean of the School of Education requested regular meetings with community people. A memo from a community worker to the community expert at the University demanded, "Would like to know why you and the Professor are keeping the community people out of your planning."

Community residents report that the Professor's manner of presentation gave them the feeling that the Document was a "fait accompli". The Professor states, "We were caught by surprise at the amount of community involvement that was actually needed. It turned out to be a tiger by the tail."

Refusing to give the Document instant approval, the agency people at the July meeting formed themselves into the Freemont Steering Committee (FSC) to give further study to the Document, feed community ideas into it, and police its implementation.

"The Steering Committee agreed that one of its important functions was that of a communications link between the community

and the PCD, the School Department and the Task Force. The Steering Committee felt that open communications were necessary for community involvement in the planning of the schools and began to develop extensive contacts within the community in order to make community involvement possible.

"A second purpose of the Steering Committee was to serve as the official community representative or as 'the community's lawyer.' The Steering Committee was not just to react to decisions made by PCD, the School Department, and the Task Force, but was to be an action committee reflecting the expressed needs of their various constituencies, thus forming a viable group to participate in planning for quality education in Freemont and making it possible to offer alternatives to those proposed facilities and programs which did not fulfill the needs of the community." *

The Steering Committee set up meetings with PCD, OIP, the Professor and the Superintendent of Schools. The Superintendent gave the District Superintendent "the authority to officially represent him and make policy decisions and state the School Department's policy." (The Proposal)

In September, 1967, the Task Force printed a supplement to the Document. The supplement stated that the Task Force's concept of "community" had always included pupils, parents, school staff, and other community members. It listed the 21 original members of the Steering Committee and stated that it was "representative of many groups who have a fundamental interest in the areas where the three new schools are to be built and also has in its membership local residents who, though not members of specific groups, have deep interest in the community. . . . The Steering Committee is determined that local residents become participants in the development of these new schools."

Public Meetings in the Community

In October of 1967, the Steering Committee held a large public meeting in Freemont in order to provide an opportunity for local residents to learn about plans for the new schools, to get local residents actively involved, and to question the School Department, PCD and Task Force officials as to how they were planning to involve community people in the planning process.

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*Early history of FSC, from a later grant Proposal 6/69.

"Because of the community's lack of basic information, the indifferent attitude of the professionals involved, and the ill-will generated by evictions at the site of one of the schools, the meeting involved a good deal of heated debate which, in turn, generated community interest." (The Proposal)

The FSC then began to have community meetings throughout the Freemont area. A chairman was elected at the November 1967 meeting. "Prior to this meeting the only people to be involved in the committee were ones that were related to community agencies, but at this meeting parents and residents were present." (The Proposal)

The Steering Committee tried to interest teachers of the district in its meetings. They sent notices to the principals in the area. Some of the principals did not notify the teachers of the meetings. Informants believe there is an unspoken policy among school officials of keeping parents and the community "on the other side of the desk." The Steering Committee then began to notify teachers directly and were able to interest 25-30 who attended meetings as individuals but not as union members or official representatives of their schools.

In January of 1968, a meeting was called by FSC with the title, "Who Should Build and Control the Schools?" The Professor was invited to explain the Document to members of the community whom it had not so far reached. Led by the new Model Cities Administrator, a group of 25 residents demanded that the Task Force subcontract the planning of the schools to the community. The Professor insisted that he could not legally do this. Some residents angrily complained that the Task Force had had ample time to consult the community and could, if it had tried, have had community people on the Task Force itself. Other residents testified that attempts had been made to include the community in the planning process. The Professor said his ideas were universally applicable and not limited to the specific community. The headmistress of a private school in the area repudiated this, saying that if he believed that, "We've been passing each other like trains in the dark." (Newspaper article). Representatives of the Urban League charged that the FSC had had extreme difficulty in obtaining information on the plan and that ready-made plans were no good anyway - the Inner City areas were fed up with the insulting "I know what's good for you" approach, they said. Many community people who attended the meeting held positions of importance and power in the Antipoverty Program and felt competent to participate in planning a school.

The upshot of this January meeting may have been the frustrated flight of the Professor back to the walls of the University. He appeared at no further meetings in the community and the FSC took over the task

of informing the community about the ideas in the Document and gaining its response. FSC felt that it needed a full-time staff to gain in-depth response from the community, so it asked PCD for help. PCD hired 2 community organizers, one black and one white. FSC felt that these organizers were "neither responsive nor responsible to the community they served." (The Proposal) One was fired and the other assigned to clerical work in the PCD office.

Without a full-time staff, FSC nevertheless continued to hold meetings to elicit as much response as possible from the community. They found that community people were interested in the improvement of their children's reading ability and in courses in black history. They wanted an end to over-crowding, broken equipment and basement classrooms next to the bathrooms. They wanted black custodians in the schools, a health facility in the schools and a "Lighted Schoolhouse." The community wished to have an active role in the formulation of educational policy. There was agreement on the need for children to feel at home in their schools and to be respected by their teachers, as individuals with good learning potential.

The educational content of the Task Force Document was actually well received in the Freemont community. There was agreement with the educational goals and techniques for the new schools. Some of the older teachers at the Steering Committee meetings were concerned about non-grading: they didn't know how children could be evaluated under such a system. Their fears were respectfully met by explanations which satisfied them. FSC never tried to change the educational specifications in the Document. They focussed on trying to introduce the community to new concepts in education. The one thing they did insist on changing was the placement of "Special Class" rooms in an area separated from the other classrooms. FSC felt that Special Classes for slow children should be near the other classes. PCD agreed to move the classes. The evils of special classes were discussed heatedly at community meetings. The community protested that children with behavior problems or language problems were regularly "dumped" into these groups which are legally supposed to be no larger than 18 but often are larger. Often nothing is taught or learned and the truancy rate is high, they complained.*

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*Personal observations by one of the authors in the special classes of several Compton City schools tends to confirm this view. Sometimes children <u>are</u> put into special class simply because they have a language problem, and often because they are behavior problems, although their intelligence is normal or better. Special class children are not retested as frequently as the law requires. The

Approaching the School Board

According to a member of FSC, it was common practice in Compton City for groups such as PCD, community organizations and the School Department to avoid the School Board at all costs. The School Board, which is elected, and is the top educational policy-making group for the city, has a reputation for being a political stepping stone. The members are thought to be often self-serving as well as conservative, protecting the support of their political constituency. It is well known, in addition, that the School Board regularly limits the effectiveness of groups it does not care to deal with by refusing to recognize them as legitimate representatives of their constituency. Only the Parent-Teacher Association is recognized as a representative of parents' viewpoints, and in Compton City, the PTA is "an integral part of the School Department" (PTA Constitution). The PTA's central office is in the School Department building, and the head of this office is appointed by the School Department.

The School Board has no jurisdiction over new schools until they are completed. The Freemont Steering Committee knew that it would have to consult with the School Board at a later time, however, and it wanted to get off to a good start by approaching it first with a non-controversial request. Community people had expressed interest in having a health facility in the schools, and so, early in 1968, FSC made that request. The School Board like the idea and, in approving it, implicitly recognized the Steering Committee as the community's representative.

During the winter and spring of 1968, FSC gradually came to the realization that their community liked the Document. In the summer of 1968, PCD hired an architect, thereby indicating that the implementation of the Document was proceeding without formal FSC approval. FSC told PCD that it would like to be informed about the architects for the other schools before they were hired. PCD agreed but did not commit itself to giving FSC veto power. Architects were hired with FSC approval.

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city seems to be even slower and more negligent in providing these classes with needed materials than it is in general. In one school, it was the customary practice to allow the special class to play ball in the schoolyard all afternoon. The assumption that these children are unteachable is made by such practices into self-fulfilling prophecy.

The Freemont Council for Community Schools

In the spring of 1968 the Steering Committee sponsored a bus trip to a neighboring city to give parents and other interested people a chance to see a non-graded, open-space community school in action. Realizing that its effectiveness had only begun and that it needed to raise money to continue its work in the community, FSC decided to incorporate. It drew up By-laws and elected officers, and in October of 1968, it filed for incorporation as the Freemont Council for Community Schools (FCCS).

According to the By-laws' "Statement of Purpose", FCCS works for "the decentralization of public schools in the Freemont community to be brought about by full participation of community residents in decision-making processes which affect the education of their children. FCCS seeks to implement the policy of decentralization through elected governing boards, consisting of parents, teachers, and community residents around each school or school district. The ultimate aim of FCCS is to bring about excellence in public education in the Freemont community. To achieve these purposes it shall furnish opportunities for coordinated planning, exchange of ideas, encouragement of leadership, and facilities for the gathering and dissemination of information and shall foster the solidarity of the Freemont community, required for achieving excellence in education."

Early in 1969, the architectural drawings were completed. FCCS approved the plans for the Warren and the Atkins but it actively opposed a circular design for the Avery. The architect had been chosen without community approval and this may have caused resentment. However FCCS said that it opposed the design because it contained much wasted space. PCD concurred and agreed to withdraw the design and hire new architects. FCCS displayed architectural drawings at meetings in the community and generated a good deal of newspaper coverage both of drawings and educational innovations in the Freemont and the Compton City newspapers. Some nuns in the area were helpful in disseminating news about educational innovation into the Catholic neighborhood of Freemont.

The Catholic neighborhood, Franklin Hill, is somewhat isolated geographically from the rest of Freemont. It is a longstanding neighborhood of working class and lower middle class Irish Catholics with some small pockets of blacks who are newcomers. Members of the FCCS believe that the neighborhood is racially bigoted.

Franklin Hill has a neighborhood "Improvement Association" of about 1000 members. One member of FCCS reported that the Association meets only when the neighborhood feels threatened in some way. Meetings draw about 50 people. No blacks are in the Association.

The Franklin Hill Improvement Association followed the plans for the Avery School which borders on the Hill. They demanded that PCD move the entrance of the school away from a private street and they demanded more parking facilities. PCD complied with their wishes. The Association seems to be treating the Avery simply as a building encroaching on their neighborhood rather than as an institution belonging to their neighborhood. Part of the reason for this lies in the fact that many Hill children attend parochial school. The possibility of closing many parochial schools is widely discussed in Compton City. Those children of Franklin Hill who attend public school go to the Kennedy which is definitely scheduled to be torn down. The Hill parents appear not to have accepted the fact that some and possibly a large proportion of their children will attend the racially balanced Avery School.

Reading scores, as measured in grades 2 and 4 of Compton City schools, show that schools 95% or more black are more than a full year behind schools 95% or more white. In the past, in cases of unprepared integration, racial differences in average achievement combined with social class differences between the groups caused those whites who are able to do so to flee the area and those who cannot flee to cause trouble. The failure of Franklin Hill to accept and prepare for participation in a racially balanced school and the failure of public authorities to help them prepare may cause conflict at the Avery.

The situation on Franklin Hill contrasts with that of the Warren school district. Although the old Warren is almost totally white, the neighborhood itself is racially integrated. Residents of both races have experience in working with each other. The new, racially balanced Warren school will surely benefit from this experience.

The Proposal

In April of 1969, FCCS was granted nonprofit status. The President and two members wrote a grant proposal which they submitted in June to OEO, a local foundation and the Danforth Foundation. The Proposal was called "A Proposal for the Organization of the Freemont Community: Toward the Development of Community Schools".

The Proposal stated, "Community schools have been defined by educators in a variety of ways: education centers incorporating neighborhood and community services; schools which are open all day and evening, seven days a week, year-round; and as education resources shaped by the community they serve.

"Essentially the community school must be defined and structured by the people in the neighborhood. This means that community participation must be an integral part of the overall planning process so that the human resources of the community will be the determining factor in the development of the school and its program."

To this end the Proposal requested $549,000 for two and a half years. It called for two phases of implementation for its demonstration in community organization. The objective of the first phase, "Community Mobilization under FCCS, "would be the organization and election of community-parent-teacher councils, one for each school, which are capable of functioning in a significant way to help shape, implement and control the programs of the new schools. The powers of these councils would be determined by the community, consulting with the school department. The members of the councils would be chosen by democratic elections." This phase, lasting approximately one year, would be divided into three stages. The purpose of the first stage would be "to disseminate information" about the new schools to the community, "to educate the community about the possibilities for community participation in the operation of the schools. . . (and). . . to initiate conversations with the School Department, including the OIP, the Superintendent's office and the School Board, and with the Teachers Union, on the concept of shared responsibility for the operation of the schools." The purpose of the second stage would be to draw up constitutions, to obtain their approval "by a vote of the members of the community," and to exert "community pressure on the central school system to accept the. . . councils and the duties assigned to them. . . as a basis for decentralization of the school system." The third stage would be the election of the councils.

During the second phase, "Preparation for Schools to Open Under Community-Parent-Teacher Councils, " the councils would work in the areas of "curriculum, community program, school personnel recruitment, orientation and training. . . in consultation with professional groups as well as community input. . . The final shape of these details must be determined by the councils, not FCCS . . . FCCS believes that the councils must have control over funds and personnel if decentralization is to be successful." Beyond that the councils must "decide their own roles." At the end of phase 2, the councils would be expected to prepare their own proposals for additional funding to keep the community councils going. The original Proposal dealt only with organizing the community and setting up councils to get the schools off to a good start.

"Accountability" is an important concept in the Proposal. The community is to be involved in "every operational activity of the schools. . . Regular reports to all community institutions and

organizations, parents and other interested individuals with regard to school enrollment, reading and mathematics levels of achievement, teacher turnover rates, curriculum content should be forthcoming at all times. In this way parents will be enabled to measure the effectiveness of the educational program and to better evaluate teacher performance." FCCS will attempt to "define and identify those powers which belong to the professionals and those which should be shared." (Proposal)

The Proposal envisions much more community participation than did the Document. There is no indication however that the School Department is willing to relinquish any of its power to the community. Instead, the Superintendent has announced that he will decentralize the system by giving greater power to the Area Superintendents. The Proposal states that it wishes to "avoid the kind of polemical situation which leads to polarization of attitudes. . . (it would). . . educate School Department officials about decentralization and the community's plan for participation . . . (and). . . bring the necessary power to bear. . . in order that they accept the . . . councils as <u>legal representatives of community interests</u>, and agree to deal with them . . . Help will be solicited from the State Board of Education in the accomplishment of our objectives." There is no evidence that the State Board would support them, however.

Construction Begins

In May of 1969 annual elections for offices in the FCCS were held and the Model Neighborhood Board coordinator was elected President. Construction began on the Warren school in the summer of 1969 and on the Atkins in the fall. FCCS pressured PCD to hire a black contractor and community people on the work forces. There was a scuffle on the floor of a meeting with a representative of PCD on this issue. PCD explained that it could not hire a black contractor because blacks have difficulty getting bonded, but they would try to push for more community and black workers. FCCS asked for a quota but PCD explained that the work crew was a different size each day and this made a quota impossible. FCCS was able to increase the number of black workers on the force by having local agencies send over construction applicants. Community people kept an eye on hiring practices from then on by passing by the construction sites and counting the blacks at work.

Simultaneously with the start of construction, FCCS sponsored a coloring contest, from June through November 1969, in 13 schools. Its purposes were:

"a. to establish a working relationship with the administration and faculty of the local school district, and

b. to associate the name of the Freemont Council for Community Schools with every parent and child in a positive fashion." (Report of the President and Executive Board to the Annual Meeting, June, 1970).

In November of 1969, FCCS had a meeting at which the names of the contest winners were announced. The PCD presented the new architectural plans for the Avery School. About 15 people were present. Concern centered on wasted space in the Avery design because the original circular plan had been rejected on this ground. The new plan was satisfactory in this regard. There was some comment about turning a courtyard into a Day Care Center, but the President did not press the demand with PCD. A part of the traffic flow pattern was questionable to the President, however, and he later consulted with an architect and suggested a small change which was agreed upon by PCD. The "Special Class" designation on some classroom doors was a source of concern: some community people wanted the names off altogether. In 1968 PCD had moved these rooms closer to the regular rooms at the request of the community. Now PCD replied, "The names are on because we are following the Document." "The community wants them off!" a FCCS member shot back. The President did not press the matter and no change was made.

The Executive Board

From November, 1969, until the required Annual Meeting in June, 1970, there were no more open meetings of FCCS. There were about 7 meetings of the Executive Board, however. According to the By-laws, Board meetings were open to anyone, but the meetings were usually attended only by about 6 Board members. "The Executive Board has the duty of carrying out whatever policies are set forth by the general membership. In matters needing attention which arise between meetings of the general membership (Quarterly meetings are required) the Executive Board will have the power to act for the general membership." (By-laws)

The Executive Board consists of the President who was "coordinator" and has recently become "specialist" for the Model

Neighborhood Board, the Vice President who is a liquor store owner and a mother, the Secretary who is a teacher at Compton State College, the Treasurer who is an elementary school teacher, and five "members at large" all active in local offices such as the Antipoverty Agency.

Six of the members of the Executive Board are women, three (President, Secretary, and one member at large) are men. Five of the members are black (President and 4 members at large) and four are white (Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and one member at large). The original chairman and two succeeding Presidents have all been black. A black President undoubtedly improves the credibility of FCCS in an increasingly black community; and some community people feel that the Compton School Department and School Committee might accede more readily to the demands of a black than a white President. The current President has had good relations all along with both the School Department and the School Board. He has spoken to members of the School Board as individuals on several occasions and feels that even the most recalcitrant of them are reasonable when approached in this manner. He has purposely become a member of a commission on Mental Health, a "pet" commission of one of the School Board members, because, he says, "one hand washes the other."

There is little friction within FCCS. Because the planning Document for the schools was virtually readymade and complete when it was formed, the early meetings were informative rather than creative. There was anger expressed toward "the establishment" on this account, of course, but the anger toward an outside party only increased the cohesiveness and single-mindedness of the community. Since then, friction has remained at a minimum, possibly because the decisions have been made in small Board meetings, thereby avoiding large-scale participation which can produce conflict. The larger community is asked to participate only when a show of strength is needed.

The small core of active workers on the Executive Board is dedicated and cohesive. In contrast to those who attended the early large meetings - a heterogeneous collection of people respresentative of the middle, working, and lower class community - the core is composed primarily of agency and school people. They are accustomed to working out problems with other people. They are also used to consulting experts and so asked an architect and an educational specialist for help when they needed it. They respect and use expertise for their own benefit.

Friction is kept to a minimum, also, by the skill of the President. He is friendly and competent, allowing everyone to express his opinion, but directing discussions with confidence. At one Board meeting, the secretary and treasurer felt FCCS should hire

a community person to be their administrator-fund-raiser. The President disagreed, saying that after major funding was received they could afford to hire local people and make mistakes, but now they should get an expert. While the President answered a phone call, the secretary and treasurer consulted with each other and decided to go along with the President's opinion. When the President returned to the meeting, he proceeded as if there had been no question raised.

The President has prevented possible friction with outside agencies by playing down the demands of other FCCS members when he did not feel they were essential; e. g. at the November 1969 meeting, he did not press PCD on the issue of a Day Care Center or removing "Special Class" names on the doors. He allowed these opinions to be expressed, but only followed through on what he felt was important - the traffic flow change.

Funding

In January of 1970, FCCS was informed by OEO that it would fund half of its Proposal if HEW would fund the other half. HEW made it clear, for its part, that it would not fund an experiment in community participation unless it had the support of the local educational agency, in this case the Compton City School Board. The FCCS President consulted with OIP. OIP suggested that he take some of the decentralization overtones out of the Proposal and then they (the FCCS President and OIP) could take it together to the School Board for approval. The teacher at Compton State College who was the secretary of FCCS was upset by this. He felt the integrity of the Proposal should be defended. He was willing to change the term "decentralization" to something milder, but he said he would rather forget the whole thing than do it halfway and be "another example of a decentralization plan that didn't work." The President agreed but felt some changes could be made to make the Proposal more palatable to the School Board.

In February of 1970, FCCS became aware that no teacher-training proposal for the new school had been written by the School Department. Open space, team-teaching schools require a new kind of teaching and teachers must be trained for it. A teacher-training proposal was needed for all open space schools to be built in Compton City, but because the construction of the Warren School, the first school to be completed, was ahead of schedule, the proposal was needed immediately. FCCS sent a letter entitled "Interim Proposal" to the Local Foundation telling it this and also explaining that the large funding for their community organization Proposal could be obtained from Federal sources if the approval of the School Board came through. They explained further that the group was unable

to devote the necessary time to rewording of the Proposal and persuading of the School Board to agree to it and that they needed a full-time administrator to do this.

The "Interim Proposal" to the Local Foundation requested $14,950 to hire personnel and run an office for 6 months for the two purposes mentioned: (1) to obtain major funding by gaining the approval of the School Board for the Proposal, and (2) to urge and aid the School Department to write a teacher-training proposal.

At the end of March 1970, a check for $14,000 arrived from the Local Foundation and a search began for a full-time administrator-fund-raiser. It was soon clear that one could not easily be found and so the FCCS agreed to settle for an administrative assistant or "specialist", a secretary, and the services of a fund-raising agency which would investigate sources of funds other than OEO and HEW. The President conferred with a local fund-raising agency which estimated a cost of $8000-$13,000 for locating major funding.

An FCCS member who is a junior high school teacher on leave and who has observed an experiment in team teaching at his school, prepared a model teacher-training proposal and gave it to the School Board. He also prepared a letter which the FCCS President signed and sent to the School Board, the City Superintendent of Schools, the Area Superintendent, the Principal of the Warren School, (She is expected to be the Principal of the new Warren.), the Elementary Education Specialist at the School Department, and OIP, discussing the need for a comprehensive teacher-training program for open space schools. He emphasized the need for sensitivity training and comprehensive discussion for parents as well as teachers and discussed the race and class conflicts which might be expected when schools previously racially segregated were integrated.

The strategy of FCCS and OIP will be to transmit their concern over the lack of a teacher-training program to the School Board so that the SchoolBoard will commission OIP to develop such a program. If the School Board initiates this OIP activity, it will be obliged seriously to consider implementing the plan when it is completed.

The FCCS President visited a school official in nearby Coast City. This official had been a principal for 22 years but was presently in charge of preparing everyone for team-teaching and non-grading in a soon-to-open community school. The FCCS President asked this official to draw up a rationale for a teacher-training program for OIP to use as a model. The President felt that the School Department respected practitioners rather than theorists and would be influenced by this person's suggestions.

A teacher's strike prevented FCCS from arranging a day trip to visit the Coast City community school with officials of OIP, the Area Superintendent and the Warren Principal. These school people expressed interest in seeing team-teaching at work in a community school, however, and said they would be happy to go at a later date.

Annual Meeting 1970

FCCS held its Annual Meeting in June, 1970. Because its treasury held only $61 over and above the $14,000 grant from the Local Foundation and the grant was limited to use for explicit purposes, FCCS was unable to notify its mailing list of 1600 families of the meeting. A mimeographed notice was prepared and distributed in some of the schools. Many never reached home. About 20 people were at the meeting. FCCS welcomes anyone as a member - local resident or not - who agrees with its purposes. Naturally most of the parents who participate have children within the attendance districts of the 3 new schools. Other participants, however, come from agencies representing larger areas. The high residential mobility in Freemont makes it difficult for FCCS to reach anything like the whole community as evidenced by the small turnout at the meeting. FCCS hopes that a side effect of their effort in the schools will be a lowering of the residential mobility rate. They feel that when families become involved in an excellent school they will stay put, both for the sake of their children and for the feeling of involvement in excellence.

The offices up for election at the Annual Meeting were those of Secretary and Treasurer. The previous year's officers were nominated and accepted. The Secretary had earlier expressed his desire not to serve again. He felt he had done enough and he was tired, he said. The President smiled and continued with the business of the meeting. Perhaps he felt he needed this person for his competency or for his prestige as a college teacher. Whatever the reason, the President was successful in keeping him in the active core.

The official from Coast City whom the FCCS President had visited and the Principal of the new Coast City community school were present at the meeting and they provided a lively discussion of educational innovation. A number of teachers present (there were five teachers and about fifteen community residents there) expressed pessimism. Compton City's reactionary School Department was not comparable to that of Coast City, they said. The teachers at the Warren, they said, were all expecting to go into the new school, but they were looking forward not to the open plan and team teaching

but to the new building per se. They were planning to close the movable partitions and teach as they always have.

FCCS has always been concerned with teachers. It feels teachers can make or break a school. Its secretary and treasurer are teachers. It has discussed its purposes with some members of the Reform Caucus, a small radical section of the Teachers Union, who have enthusiastically supported their Proposal. The Proposal states that FCCS will "work to establish a congenial relationship with the Teachers Union," emphasizing that decentralization can mean greater "power for the teacher in bringing about desirable changes in the educational process." The official position of the Teachers Union on community participation is negative, however. It does not want parents to have power over them. The President of the Union has speculated that 400 teachers might support "community control" but 2000 would oppose it.

FCCS wants the right to hire teachers for the new schools, but it would probably settle for veto power. Knowing that the Teachers Union will not agree to having teachers transferred out of a school district the FCCS would like to have the plan for community councils put into effect before any of the new schools open so that teachers may be selected by these councils and the question of large-scale transfers will not arise. At present, the School Department is planning on assigning the Warren teachers to the new Warren. FCCS is beginning to see the folly in the Document having called the new school a replacement for the old Warren. Recognizing that the community may not get the degree of power that it wishes, the President has stated that after he has built a good reputation with the School Board, he can ask for curriculum changes, personnel changes, and perhaps black teachers.

The Future of FCCS

During July of 1970 the officials from Coast City developed a 38-page Rationale for a teacher-training program. The Rationale proposes that an interviewing board composed of parents, teachers and School Department representatives choose the new teachers. It also proposes that the teachers train in the new school during the summer months before the official September 1971 opening and that some children be present during the session so that "bumps can be ironed out."

The School Department will not object to team teaching - it is in progress already in some Compton City schools. The School Department may have difficulty in accepting the community's definition of what community participation is however - interviewing

and choosing teachers, for example. The head of OIP wants to be shown; he's "from Missouri," says the FCCS President, but he doesn't want to be shown in his own city. The FCCS President is hoping that the trip to Coast City will cause him to accept the concept of active community participation. It is doubtful that the Teachers Union would allow FCCS to choose the staff for the new schools, even if OIP did agree. The Document suggested community participation in the planning but not the actual running of the educational program in the schools. Title III of ESEA does not require local community participation even in the planning, although the previous administration in Washington encouraged it. Some informants in the Compton City School Department do not expect the present Federal administration to insist on community participation. Federal funding from OEO and HEW will not be forthcoming without School Board approval, if at all, now that the Federal administration has cut funding drastically. The School Board will not give away any of its power voluntarily and there is no evidence that anyone is influential enough to compel them to do so. The State Board of Education has never indicated that it would support a local group against the School Board on the issue of community participation or decentralization. There are two citywide organizations of people concerned about the city schools which could muster some support for FCCS, but how much is not known. A recent "attitude survey" shows that "there is not much support. . . (citywide for). . . creating neighborhood school committees, that would give parents more control over their schools. . . Most parents, both black (84%) and white (85%) prefer the traditional forms of involvement - the PTA, talking individually with the teachers, working through the city School Board - to setting up new structures such as neighborhood school committees." (Newspaper article)

What chance does FCCS have of accomplishing its objectives? The goals of the original Steering Committee were to inform the community and feed its ideas into the Document, and also to police the implementation of the Document. The community has been informed in meetings and newspaper articles, although many newer residents have no knowledge of FCCS. The community ideas that have been fed into the Document include a health facility and the moving of Special Classrooms. "Policing" has centered on pushing the School Department to develop a teacher-training program. It seems that the FCCS will continue to have influence in this area because OIP has committed itself orally to working with FCCS here. Policing failed when it came to seeing that a house was retained on each construction site for community use. Perhaps it was too early in the Steering Committee's existence for it to be "on top of things". So far FCCS has not goaded any city agency into developing a plan for the interchange bus system called for in the Document, but there is still time for this.

It seems that the further success of FCCS, and indeed its future existence, will depend on its ability to organize the Freemont community into a cohesive entity which will be able to sway public opinion strongly enough to force the School Board to accede to its demands. This would demand much time and major funding. Without federal funding, which requires School Board approval beforehand, FCCS will have to search for an independent foundation whose goals match theirs. A local fundraising agency has stated that there are no local sources of funding available, so the search will be long and hard.

If funds are not forthcoming, it is doubtful that FCCS can continue. The pessimism felt about the small turnout at the Annual Meeting would probably turn into dejection and a decision to give up the long, hard fight. If this happened, FCCS would have performed an invaluable service, but of course it would have failed in the implementation of its prime goal as outlined in its Proposal - the organization of councils to run the new schools.

If, on the other hand, major funds do materialize, they will provide the needed "shot in the arm" to enable the small core of dedicated workers to continue in their purpose and indeed perhaps even to accomplish it.

TWELVE COMMUNITY SCHOOL GROUPS, BRIEFLY OBSERVED

The three organizations described in the preceding chapters were chosen for intensive study because they were the most active community school groups in Compton City which came to our attention. In the process of choosing groups for study, however, we observed at meetings of six additional groups in Compton City and three in its satellite cities. We also read the planning documents of two Compton City groups which had been formed to plan new schools and had dissolved when the task was completed. Finally, we observed the meetings of Citizens for Participation in the Schools (CPS), a citywide organization which sought to bring the growing number of community school groups into a coalition.

Of the eleven additional neighborhood groups we had contact with, * seven were formed around existing schools and four were formed to plan new schools. Eight were solely or predominantly white in racial composition; three were predominantly black. The community school movement in Compton City is not just an aspect of black power; it has spread into the white communities as well. However black groups are over-represented in the movement in proportion to their weight in the population. Thirty-four percent of all "organizations concerned about education" in Compton City are black while blacks are only 18% of the population. **

Five of the eleven groups resembled the Appley Council in that they had many members who were articulate, organizationally skilled and well-educated; six were more like the Wadsworth-Madison Council in that most of the members were not college-educated and many had less than a high school education -- although there were usually a few professional people present, frequently the anti-poverty worker or university representative who had started the group.

The meetings of these two categories of organization were markedly different. The groups which had many college-educated members were dominated by them. These groups made full use of the members' capacity to articulate general points of view; of their

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*Omitting CPS.

**This calculation is based on an annotated listing of all such organizations in Compton City compiled by the League of Women Voters.

familiarity with parliamentary procedure; and of their wide range of information concerning the workings of the government and the school system. Meetings where less educated members were dominant frequently were at a loss to articulate grievances in a general way. Members usually expressed them in the form of personal anecdotes. These meetings also suffered from a lack of needed information.

The two categories of groups also differed in the kinds of issues which concerned them. The less-educated groups were primarily concerned with the poor physical plant of the schools; the need for hot lunches; the existence of a drug problem and a delinquency problem. They seldom called for any change in the character of the schooling offered nor did they demand a share of the power to make educational decisions. Probably because they did not believe they had the competence to make such decisions, they were content to leave them to the professionals. It was the better educated groups which pushed for community participation in educational decision-making and specifically for the community school in one or another of its forms.

For example, one group in a predominantly Italian neighborhood had a membership representing parents and teachers from twelve schools. About fifty people attended its monthly meetings. Their main concern was to get repairs made in the badly deteriorating school buildings. They also wanted Italian taught in the schools. They exerted pressure to replace an "Anglo" principal with a man of Italian descent. The leading personality in this group told the observer that the neighborhood principals and teachers were "fine" but were hamstrung by "downtown headquarters." At the time we observed them, this group was becoming concerned about the need for a new school in the neighborhood and the political problems attendant on land acquisition. They were working with OIP on planning the new school. However, there was no sentiment expressed for having a community school or for adopting any educational innovations.

In contrast, a group which contained many upper-middle-class, highly educated members, as well as a number who were less educated, had formed around two elementary schools in their district. This group was strongly committed to "continuous progress", "individualized instruction", and "open classrooms". They succeeded, with the approval of the associate superintendent and the principal, in working together with a group of teachers to develop a non-graded curriculum for the youngest children in one of the schools and they were hoping to expand it. The development of the curriculum required attendance at weekly and sometimes more frequent working meetings which the well-off women in this community were able to undertake. This group also filled the schools with adults who acted as teacher

aides and sometimes instructed classes in their professional specialities. The leader of the group said he had so many volunteers for work in the schools that his chief task was to coordinate their efforts.

The predominantly black community school groups really form a third category. Their chief educational concern is to improve the reading and arithmetic skills of the children. For the most part they are uninterested in the "open school" ideology which in one degree or another the white middle class has adopted. On occasion they are quite critical of it. Thus at one meeting of the Wadsworth-Madison Council a member said the trouble with Compton's schools was that they imitated "suburban education". According to her, the schools were too free and not sufficiently structured. The middle class liberal critics of Compton's schools take quite the opposite view.

Whether they were planning a new school or trying to improve an old one, all of the community school groups engaged in political activity. Planning a new school required that they go through a complex process. First they worked with OIP to produce a planning document with physical and educational specifications for the school. Second, they had to negotiate with the Compton Urban Renewal Authority concerning the site for the school. This step sometimes involved conflict since the URA was not always able or willing to make available the precise site or kind of site the group wanted. Third, it was necessary to take account of a state law requiring racial balance in the schools. In Compton City, this law has been interpreted to mean that new schools which are racially balanced (no more than 50% non-white) receive 65% of their building funds from the state. If a new school is <u>not</u> racially balanced by this definition, the state contributes much less. Very often problems arise as to just what is meant by "racial balance." To solve such problems entails dealing with a task force of city and state officials responsible for administering the racial imbalance law.

The architectural plans for the new school must be approved by the city Public Construction Department. This department is under the aegis of City Hall, while the School Department is under the aegis of an autonomous, elected School Board. PCD does not in fact confine itself to architectural matters. Its position is that the character of the building is inextricably related to the nature of the educational program. On the whole it has promoted a type of new school building which accommodates the current innovations:

team teaching, individualized progress and the open classroom. Finally the educational plans for the school must be approved by the School Department. Since the School Department often has political differences both with the Mayor's Office and the State Department of Education, as well as philosophic differences with PCD a favorable response to community plans from one agency does not guarantee a similar response from the others. For instance, one group in Compton City indicated at a meeting that it wanted to change the planned site for two new neighborhood schools. The Renewal Authority representative said that either site could be made available but not both of them; the State Department of Education representative suggested that both would be required to accommodate the needs of the school. Similarly, the Renewal Authority tended to favor small elementary schools as a matter of philosophy while some members of the State Department favored large ones both for the economies of scale and the improved possibility of attaining racial balance in a large school.

University Liaison

An unpublished study of eight community school groups across the country states that while such groups frequently start by having a liaison with a university, this usually ends after about a year because the middle class outlook of the universities does not jibe with the outlook of the groups. Our data do not point to a similar conclusion. Of the three groups described in earlier chapters two had university affiliations which persist after two years. Of three additional groups observed which had a university affiliation, one did dissolve it within a year. However, in this case the community group was itself middle class. Its difficulty , it claimed, was simply that the university made decisions without consulting the group on occasions when the group believed it rightly should have been consulted.

Neighborhood Factions

One Compton City group became involved in a problem which recurs in many neighborhoods. After a year of work with the OIP on a plan for a new school, during which they publicized their meetings and invited broad participation but got little, they held a public meeting to review the nearly completed planning document. At this meeting there suddenly appeared a new clique of community residents who denied that the document had any validity because they had not been included in writing it. There were not more than seven people involved but this was a fairly large number considering that the document-writing group was itself very small. Furthermore, the seven represented an ethnic group which had many members in the

neighborhood but which previously had resisted efforts to get them to participate. The force of the clique's argument lay mainly in the fact that they were members of this important ethnic group. Their challenge caused a split in the community organization. All work on planning stopped while the OIP tried to negotiate a compromise.

Citizens for Participation in the Schools

In the spring of 1969 a liberal political organization in Compton decided to bring together members of the various community school groups into a new city-wide organization which presumably would strengthen them all. They began with a list of 30 to 40 groups but no very clear idea of what kind of structure would best suit the effort. Some of the founders wanted an organization made up of delegates from neighborhood groups. Others wanted no organization at all but simply a channel of communication which would keep the groups informed about each other's activities and enable them to act together when it seemed desirable. Still others wanted an organization made up of individuals, especially parents of school children.

One difficulty the CPS faces is the difference between the conservative, less-educated neighborhood groups and the liberal-to-radical better-educated ones. Both the educational and political differences are stumbling blocks. At a meeting during which the CPS was planning slogans for a demonstration, it was repeatedly admonished by some delegates to use simpler words that their constituents could understand. Slogans were limited to very general anti-School Department themes because the groups could not agree on anything more specific. The Appley Council abstained from taking part officially in the demonstration because it felt that participation might jeopardize chances for approval of their planning document which had not yet reached the School Department.

CPS has moved very slowly. However, it does represent a possible way to unite the energies of the various community school organizations in Compton City. At present these organizations are weakened by the fact that they frequently seek similar goals in ignorance of each other's efforts. For instance, the Freemont and Appley Councils both want to find a way to offer in-service training to Compton teachers who will be appointed to their new "open-classroom" schools. Freemont is trying to persuade the School Department to offer the training while Appley is seeking funds with which to offer a workshop itself. Neither group is informed about the other's activity. This situation permits the School Department to use a tactic which Harold Lasswell once labelled

"limitation by partial incorporation". The Department makes extraordinary concessions - exceptions to the rules - provided that each exception is regarded as a special case and sets no new precedent for the system as a whole. Thus, for example, they appointed black principals whose names were not on the principals list. They allowed parents to help choose the teachers for one new school. They allowed parents and teachers in a third school to work out a non-graded curriculum together, independent from "downtown" where curriculum is usually made.

In the past each of the community groups has been interested mainly in gains for themselves. There has been little collaboration. If CPS can establish effective communication, however, it will force the question: Why was this granted to them and not to us? It will also raise the question for the community organizations of whether they are willing sometimes to sacrifice a local gain for the sake of the longer more distant goal of bringing about change in the whole system.

The leadership of the CPS is a coalition of upper middle class white liberals and the most needful minorities in the city; the blacks and the Puerto Ricans. To succeed CPS will have to steer a course between the perils of factionalism and the error of not recognizing that educational needs differ in different neighborhoods.

CONCLUSIONS

In Compton City the community school groups are creatures of the liberal "establishment". Even where a group was formed in protest at having been left out of the planning of a school -- as in the case of the Appley and Freemont Councils -- it was the planners' attempt to win community consent for their plan, or to bring the neighborhood more actively into the planning process, which provoked indignation that the community had not been consulted from the beginning, and provided the impetus for formation of the community groups. If the Appley School Project had not sent an organizer into the local community, and if the University Task Force had not made efforts to win support for its new school plan in the Freemont area, the schools might well have been built as a routine government function - without community participation and without any protest at the lack of neighborhood participation. That neighborhoods should share in the planning of new schools is an innovative idea. Nothing in Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act unequivocally requires that the local neighborhood shall take part in planning local schools which have Title III assistance. The atmosphere in Washington at the time strongly encouraged such participation, however. Community action in the war on poverty, in urban renewal, and in neighborhood health centers was the order of the day - provided for in Federal legislation. Community school action was a continuation of this movement which by 1968 had taken root in urban minority and low-income neighborhoods.

Of the fourteen local organizations we observed, ten were initiated by the Organization for Innovative Planning, by an anti-poverty official, or by a university under contract to the government or a foundation. The remaining four arose out of neighborhood discontent with the schools and were formed by local leaders. Even these, however, sought and sometimes found government, foundation, or university help. The Wadsworth-Madison Council is a case in point.

In two of the three groups we observed intensively, there was a "community control" faction which played a role at the organization's inception. In both cases these factions withdrew after a short time. They had no financial resources; they were a small minority within the groups; and the majority made clear its fear that their radical position would endanger its chance to gain a share of decision-making power over the schools.

The community school groups are also creatures of the establishment in that they must depend on the government and the foundations for the funds which are necessary to their survival. In middle and high income neighborhoods, voluntary associations can count on their members for large contributions of time, money and varied professional skills. In low income neighborhoods these things must be supplied in good part by a paid staff. The Appley Council could not have paid its two full-time coordinators, or financed its community recreational programs, or printed and circulated its minutes, if not for the fact that the Appley School Project in the Compton Medical Center shared its funds with the Council. The Wadsworth-Madison Council was funded by USOE. The Freemont Council carried on its work with a small foundation grant, part of which was devoted to an effort to find funding on a larger scale.

At several points in its history the Appley Council was threatened with extinction for lack of funds. By the late summer of 1970, however, that threat had disappeared. The OIP, the PCD, and the School Department had all announced their approval of the "environmental plan" for the Appley School complex and publicly praised the Council for its contribution to the plan. The State Department of Education had made a grant to the Council to facilitate work toward racial balance in the school. An architectural firm had been retained by PCD, with Council approval, to build the Appley complex, and a procedure for cooperation between the architects and the Council had been agreed upon. Thus the many government agencies whose announced policy is to cooperate with "the community" in planning new schools have legitimized the Appley Council as the community's spokesman by dealing with it in that capacity. It is no small convenience for these agencies that there exists a single community group with which they can work on the Appley School complex with no fear that the cooperative endeavor will be undermined by challenge from competing community factions. The Appley School Council has become an important asset to the city and state agencies which want political credit for working successfully with "the community". There is no possibility that it will now be permitted to expire for lack of funds.

Thus the Appley Community Council has acquired real power. The government agencies building the school and planning its

educational policies must consult with the Council. If the Council should be at odds with an official decision and unable to negotiate a compromise, it could seriously embarrass the agency concerned by publicizing the disagreement and casting doubt on the touted policy of "community participation".

What is most interesting in all this is that the Council's power was, in a real sense, handed to it. Its strength in the first instance came from the Appley School Project at the Compton Medical Center. Throughout the Council's existence, but most importantly during its first year, the staff of the Project lent it moral, financial and technical support which gave it a stature it could not possibly otherwise have had. The Project staff had written the first draft of the planning document before the Council ever came into existence. The Project did the initial and most difficult part of the staff work which now promises to make, not just the school, but the whole Appley complex of community social services a reality. It found the funds which kept both itself and the Council going after the initial Title III planning grants ran out. The staff of the Appley School Project was ideologically committed to community participation and it played a very large role inside the Medical Center to persuade the policy-makers there that the Council should be strengthened rather than ignored. At a later stage, as we have pointed out, the many government agencies which dealt with the Council lent it increasing prestige.

All this would have been to little avail, or more likely would not have happened at all had the Council been an apathetic or incompetent organization. But the core of 15 to 30 people who effectively were the Council, were unusually talented, sophisticated, and hard-working. Nevertheless they did not gain power by building a strong base of support in the community and then confronting the power structure with the community's demands. Their base in the community is very fragile. They gained power, rather, by aggressively seizing the opportunity proffered them to share power with those who already had it, and by making rather more of that opportunity than some members of the power structure had hoped or expected.

Defining the Community: the Problem of Legitimacy

Traditional parent-teacher associations have a clearly defined constituency. The principal and teachers of the school and the parents of the children who attend it are the legitimate members. The new community school groups have a more difficult problem defining their constituency because they are often concerned with more than one school and because their concept of the

community school includes services to all age groups. They must define who is the community they seek to represent and they must establish a way to legitimize their right to speak for it.

Most of the groups accepted the attendance districts of the schools with which they were concerned as their geographic areas of jurisdiction. Legitimizing the group was handled in two ways. Either the members were delegates from existing neighborhood organizations or they were directly elected by the residents of the district.

The Appley Council used the first method. Its representatives for its three residential neighborhoods were designated by neighborhood organizations. (In the case of Chinatown they included delegates who did not live in the Appley school district. But this potentially embarrassing fact was never discussed.) The Appley Council also defined the "community" to include the large public and semi-public organizations located within the district, such as the schools themselves and the Compton Medical Center. This procedure raises delicate questions concerning the apportionment of votes as between representatives of residents and representatives of institutions. Thus far the Appley Council has solved the problem in ad hoc fashion. Compton Medical Center is its only institutional member. The one dispute--over a question of land use--which broke out between Chinatown and the Medical Center was resolved by negotiation outside the Council between high level representatives of both parties.

The Wadsworth-Madison Council used the second method to legitimize its role. Its community representatives were directly elected by the neighborhood and its school representatives by their colleagues. The turnout in the neighborhood election was very low, however, a fact which makes the Council vulnerable to the charge that it is not really representative of the community.

In fact, all the community school groups are vulnerable on that score since none of them has a broad membership base in the community. We saw how one group's legitimacy was challenged and its planning activities disrupted by members of an ethnic group who were not represented on it, after it had spent a year working with the OIP and had virtually completed a plan for a new school. The challenge was effective despite the fact that the planning group, when first formed, had made efforts to include all elements of the neighborhood and in particular all ethnic groups. The response at the time had been disappointing. Yet the challengers insisted that now that they were here, planning would have to begin all over again - this time with them included. The issue was not the content of the school plan, which they had barely had time to examine, it was the

question of how and by whom power to plan the school would be shared in the neighborhood. This particular group, in other words had failed to establish itself as the recognized, legitimate spokesman for the district in planning the new school. In the absence of such recognition, a group could be challenged again and again by newcomers to the scene and its work come to nothing.

The Appley School Council, too, while it is firmly established for the time being in its external relations is not free from the threat of internal factionalism. Since the Appley complex will provide a wide range of social services and since the Council through its "transitional programs" is already experimenting with some of these on a small scale, some members have come to view the Council as the spokesman of the community in all social service matters. For instance, the director of a study which will examine the feasibility of housing for the elderly in the district made a presentation of his plans to the Council, although the Council has no formal relationship to his work. However, it has the informal power, or so he evidently believes, to help or to sabotage it. Yet not all members of the Council or the neighborhood accept the Council as the peak organization for the community in these matters. Chinatown which is the most important neighborhood on the Council and has its vital core in the Appley School district, also has its network of exclusively Chinese organizations - increasingly active in matters of education, health and housing - which speak for Chinese-Americans throughout the New England region. Chinatown is also planning its own new community center very close to where the Appley complex will be. Almost inevitably there will be some overlap in services, competition for clients and jurisdictional disagreements. The problem of who speaks for the community - and whether the community is a geographic or an ethnic entity - might then become acute.

The Appley School Complex is of special interest because its conception as a coordinated body of social services integrated at the neighborhood level and governed by a community corporation, perfectly embodies the hopes of the social reformers who originated OEO community action programs of the sixties. As Daniel P. Moynihan describes it, the failure to coordinate services to the poor at the Federal level led these reformers to hope that the task of integration could be accomplished at the local level. At the same time they hoped that the Community Action programs would organize the poor for political action. ". . .as for the utterly disparate, but simultaneously entertained goals of program coordination and political activism, neither occurred, and in the process of not occurring, all hell broke loose all over the place."*

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*Daniel P. Moynihan, Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding: Community Action in the War on Poverty, The Free Press, New York, 1969, p. 130.

While to the Appley School Project staff who began their work in 1967 with a shoestring and a good idea, it must seem a near miracle that the multi-use building they planned will actually be built and will probably house many of the community services they envisioned for it, the fact remains that the most difficult problems lie ahead. Can the work of many independent social service agencies, even if they are in the same building and serving the same community, be sufficiently coordinated so that they will function as an integrated whole from the clients' standpoint? Can a lay community corporation, like the Appley School Community Council effectively coordinate such a complex of professional services? If so, what resources would they need for the task and where would the resources come from? And would the social agencies, staffed by trained professionals, be willing to accept the Council as the coordinating authority? These are difficult and as yet unanswered questions.

The Challenge to Professional Authority

The difficulties in finding a way for a lay community corporation to coordinate and govern a center of professional social services are only one aspect of the problem of tension between laymen and professionals which the community school groups (and other community action programs) have faced. As we saw, the lay members of the Wadsworth-Madison Council were disgruntled because they felt the professional educators were running the Council with only token participation from them.

The Appley Council challenged professional authority on every side. They demanded - and got - the right to have a say in choosing the architect for the building; they questioned the right of any member of the Compton Medical faculty to apply for a Federal grant for any project in the community without first consulting them; they wanted a say in what the goals of the Medical Center's health team for the school health program should be.

The most fundamental challenge to professional authority by community school groups, however, is the demand for community participation in appointing teachers and in determining what the educational style of the school and the curriculum shall be. Both the Appley and the Freemont Councils made such demands -- softly worded. At the same time both groups attempted --by trying to draw the district teachers into their organizations -- to avoid the impasse they saw in New York City. It was their view that the community and the teachers had common interests. Both needed to increase their power vis-à-vis the higher levels of the educational bureaucracy. If methods of teacher recruitment were changed, so

that teachers could seek positions in schools where they wanted to work, and if communities could select their teachers from among these voluntary applicants, teachers and community would be in harmony concerning educational philosophy. Both the Freemont and Appley Councils believed and said that Compton City teachers would need special in-service training to qualify for teaching in their proposed "open-classroom" schools, and that only volunteers for this kind of teaching should staff the schools.

While the groups hoped for some degree of control over hiring and curriculum, both the Teachers' Union and the School Department were opposed to community "interference" in these matters. The communities believe that staffing and curriculum decisions involve value judgments which can only be made by those who know and sympathize with the community's educational values. The educators maintain, on the other hand, that such decisions require professional competence above all. Some young teachers in Compton City are attracted to the ideals of the community school and the open classroom but only a very few have joined community school organizations - including the Appley and the Freemont.

The issues have not yet been squarely faced in Compton City. At present, the School Department is acting on the assumption that it will appoint the teachers and determine the curriculum in the new schools as in the old, and the community councils are acting on the assumption that their participation in these decisions will be negotiated with the school authorities.

Again the issue may well turn out to be less a matter of differences in educational philosophy than a problem of the locus of decision-making power. Compton City has a highly traditional public school system, but there are many members of the School Department and of the State Department of Education who are sympathetic to the growing minority of parents who want to experiment with the new innovations. It is not so much educational innovation which the bureaucracy fears; it is the challenge to their professional authority. And the school bureaucracy just might try to solve this problem by initiating significant innovative experiments itself.

Political Socialization

Not a few leaders of community school groups in Compton City are veterans of the anti-poverty and urban renewal wars and many more leaders have emerged from the school groups themselves. We have seen what a large variety of private, city and state agencies the three organizations we described had to deal

with. In the process, their active members learned their way around these important local bureaucracies.

In addition the groups provided a valuable apprenticeship in political tactics and strategy. For instance, as a member of the Appley Council, the Chinese community became involved in a dispute with the Medical Center over the location of parking facilities. The other two neighborhoods on the Council offered Chinatown their unqualified support. The coalitions in this conflict were new for Chinatown. So also was the tactic of threatening Compton University with public embarrassment if it failed at least to compromise with the Chinese community's demands. The Wadsworth-Madison Council learned the uses of a threatening posture in its battle with the School Board for black principals.

In short, the community school groups are political. They provide potential neighborhood leaders with political experience and some public visibility. A new cadre of leaders of minority groups and the poor are being trained in the community action movement.

Social Mobility

The chance to build the foundation of a political career was not the only kind of upward mobility opportunity the community school groups offered their members. Many of them provided jobs and educational opportunities with promising futures to people for whom such opportunities had theretofore been closed. The Wadsworth-Madison Council hired its own full-time professional staff from the local community. In not a few cases the jobs involved far more responsibility and income than the jobs these staff members had previously held. The Council paid its members - some of them former AFDC mothers - for attendance at meetings, and it hired some of them as paraprofessional aides in the schools. It provided training courses with college credit for those aides who had high school diplomas and eventually, under provisions of the Education Professions Development Act enrolled some of them in a college course which will eventually lead to their qualification as teachers. Most conspicuously, of course, the Wadsworth-Madison Council opened the way to advancement in the school system for a good many black male teachers.

The Appley Council, with far less funding, had only two underpaid coordinators as its staff. However, in its negotiations with the Compton Medical Center the Appley Council opened up job opportunities at the Medical Center for bilingual residents of the district. The monthly clinic for Chinese-speaking patients was

partially staffed by Chinese doctors who pressed for regular appointments on the hospital staff. The community has also pressed for more places in Compton Medical School classes for students from the neighborhood, and these requests are receiving serious consideration.

Impact on Education

Neighborhood participation in the education of their children is ostensibly the raison d'etre of the groups we have studied, and yet it is only part of the reason for their existence. Community action is a struggle for power by groups which have long been deprived of it and the schools, in a sense, are only a stage where a part of the struggle is enacted.

But the community school groups are interested in education as well as in power. Thus far in Compton City their impact on schooling has been small. They have been far less the originators of educational concepts than the channels through which educationally innovative ideas are diffused. Their meetings are regularly visited by educators and by salesmen who inform them about all the latest, most fashionable educational innovations. Members of the groups visit schools where they can observe innovations in practice. In this way many people who would have known little or nothing about the available alternatives to the kind of schooling their children now receive have, through participation in community school groups, become very well informed about them. Some members of the Appley Council whom we interviewed referred to this aspect of their Council experience as "a revelation". It seemed to change and to raise their educational standard of living. For instance, while most parents of K through 5 pupils in the Appley school district are satisfied and even pleased with the existing schools,* most members of the Council, including the Chinese members who were originally most favorably disposed toward the Appley schools, have come to believe that their children's schooling could and should be better than it is.

*This statement is based on the results of a sample survey conducted a year before the Appley Council was founded.

The desire for educational innovation is strongly reflected in the Appley and Freemont planning documents. Both groups want open classrooms, team teaching, and individualized progress plans rather than the traditional grade levels. The Appley school is also designed so that it could, if desired, accommodate computerized programmed instruction.

The Wadsworth-Madison Council working with existing schools has so far accomplished little by way of changing their styles of teaching. Its energies during its first two years have largely been absorbed by internal political problems and by the effort to bring order to schools which were on the verge of chaos.

There is also a fundamental difference in the educational needs of the Wadsworth-Madison and, for instance, the Appley district pupils. Appley pupils score at or above the average on citywide achievement tests. Wadsworth-Madison pupils score near the bottom of the scale. The traditional system of schooling in Compton City is failing to teach the Wadsworth-Madison pupils the basic 3 R's. So the educational focus of the two groups is different. Since their schools have few behavior problems, Appley parents have not many qualms about experimenting with a style of education which gives pupils more personal freedom and educational autonomy. Wadsworth-Madison parents are almost wholly concerned with bringing their children up to par in basic reading and mathematical skills.

This difference in the educational priorities of its constituent groups is a problem for the CPS. All its member groups want change in the school system, but the kinds of change they want and the purposes for which they want it are different.

The sharp differences in the education needs of different neighborhoods is also a fundamental problem for the Compton School Department, which historically has ignored them. There have been good reasons for this. Differential treatment of neighborhoods within a single school system runs the danger of violating the "equal opportunity" which schools are supposed to offer. School systems have tried to conform to the equality ideal by treating all groups of children alike on their arrival at school, despite the enormous differences in their early childhood experiences at home. In recent years the "equal opportunity" ideal has undergone drastic redefinition. It is now understood to mean, not so much equal educational <u>inputs</u>, as an average equality of educational <u>achievement</u> by all ethnic groups. How to arrive at this result is a problem American society has barely begun to cope with.

APPENDIX ON METHOD

The chief method used in this study was participant-observation. The observers attended all meetings of the groups (except where absence was unavoidable) and as many committee meetings as their schedules would permit. Since we were known to and accepted by the groups as researchers, we were able to take notes during meetings. Immediately after each meeting attended, or as soon after as possible, the notes - expanded by further recalled details - were dictated for later transcription. We soon learned what could be left out because it was certain to be in the minutes of the meeting, and what had to be set down because it concerned matters of interest to us but not likely to be included in the minutes. Informally initiated interviews, and the contents of many conversations concerning the groups' activities which took place outside of meetings were also recorded and transcribed. In the case of the Appley Council the fifteen most active members consented to formal tape-recorded interviews, partly as a contribution to a history of the Council's first ten months which the observer had been asked and had agreed to write.

The observers had access to all the official documents of the groups: minutes of meetings; official correspondence; intra-group memoranda; drafts and final versions of planning documents, and so on.

The three groups were not altogether alike in their treatment of the researchers. All held meetings which were open to the public so that entree was easy. The Appley Council -- which at one time or another was observed for brief periods by several researchers -- was quite open and willing to be studied. It had a formal policy of requiring each researcher to state his aims and affiliations and to promise to show the Council any publications concerning its activities. This was not for purposes of censorship, however, but only for the record. The Wadsworth-Madison Council was somewhat less open with visitors. At certain crucial moments it went into "executive session" from which it excluded all non-members. Such sessions never occurred at the Appley Council. The Freemont Council was also quite open with the observer, but occasionally requested that some particular fact not be published - something which, again, the Appley Council never requested.

Among practitioners of participant-observation today, there is a wide range of views as to how the role should be played. The traditional view is that the observer should participate as "neutrally" as possible, that is, in such a way that his actions do not change the course of the group from what it would have been without his presence or change it as little as possible. Today, views are far more flexible, and some hold that the observer should also be a fully participant member acting no differently from the way he would were he not also observing. Some even hold that the participant-observer should on occasion intervene deliberately in order to test the consequences of certain actions if that should seem theoretically useful.

Our own view leans to the traditional. Yet we have certainly sinned against it. Like the anthropologist with "his" beloved tribe, each of us has come to feel as much a member as an observer of the Appley and Freemont groups respectively. We have become at least partly identified with the groups' goals, fond of the friends we have made there and unable to refrain from helping when we thought we could. Even so, it is unlikely that our participation has changed the course of either group in any significant way. Even if we were gifted with leadership capacity (which we are not) both our methodological concern not to influence the group significantly and the groups' own lingering awareness that we were not fully members but also observers would have prevented us from exerting any important influence.